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WHEN IS A DOLE NOT A DOLE? Apparently when it pleases Mr. Hoover to make political capital out of the suffering of many hundreds of thousands of his countrymen. A Congressional fund to relieve the victims of drought and depression would be a dole; but a privately raised fund belatedly sponsored by the President is described as charity. Perhaps a constitutional lawyer or a philologist might be able to explain the difference between the two, but frankly we see none. We believe that a Senate dollar will buy just as much as a Red Cross dollar. We believe that a hungry Arkansas farmer will get precisely as much nourishment out of a meal provided for him by Congress as he will from food paid for by Mr. Hoover's "sound American tradition and spirit of voluntary aid." This very necessary relief work must be undertaken and the people themselves must bear the cost, whether they pay the bill through taxes or in the form of voluntary contributions. The essential thing is to get relief to the stricken districts, whether this be done by the Red Cross alone, by Congress acting upon its own initiative, or by both of these agencies working together. What we do object to is the dilatory attitude Mr. Hoover has shown toward the whole question of relief. Congress, or at least the Senate, wanted to provide this very necessary relief many weeks ago, but Mr. Hoover has just now been awakened to the existence of an emergency.

THE TEMPERAMENT OF MR. HOOVER is such, however, that he cannot act promptly when the time for action arrives, and so overwhelming is his desire for reelection in 1932 that when he finally does move he places political considerations before all else. The unemployment situation offers an excellent example. He sought to minimize the extent of the unemployment until the clamor of undeniable truth grew so loud that he was forced to appoint an employment committee to study the problem and to show that the President really was on his toes. The move proved an empty political gesture. What, one may ask, has this committee done? Where are the results of its studies? Where are its recommendations? Even its chairman admits that while the committee has been studying, unemployment has been growing. With regard to the relief question the story is repeated. Mr. Hoover's shamefaced apologists in Congress cried down the suggestion of a dole, laughed at the idea that suffering was widespread. Alone and almost unaided, Senator La Follette revealed the sham of their legal arguments and showed up the hollow pretense of their insistence that relief was not necessary. Armed with unassailable facts the Wisconsin Senator compelled Mr. Hoover to swallow the words of his apologists and admit that relief was needed. There followed his appeal for Red Cross funds, which was so worded as to make it appear that the emergency had only lately arisen and that the President had responded promptly and generously to the needs of that emergency, whereas in truth he had refused to act, had indeed blocked all action, until the facts hurled at him from the Senate by Mr. La Follette and others proved more than he could stand. As a result of it all, the Senate, by a vote of 56 to 27, added a rider to the Interior Department appropriation bill giving the Red Cross $25,000,000 for food and other supplies. Administration leaders in the House express doubt whether they can hold their adherents in line against the rider.

LESS MONEY AND NOT MORE, if the money takes the form of federal appropriations for public works, is the exhortation of a committee of the American Engineering Council which has been considering methods of relieving business depression. The committee particularly condemns the proposal of adding another billion dollars to what is already available. Any such addition to the vast sum appropriated by the United States, the States, municipalities, railways, utilities, and other private agencies, even if it could be made immediately available, would, in the opinion of the committee, "be of secondary and relatively minor importance as a cure for the present depression." Moreover, no matter how large the appropriation, "the rate of expenditure and consequently the time within which its beneficial effects can be realized" depends upon the organization facilities which the government has and upon "conformity to legal requirements, the preparation of plans and specifications, the selection and acquisition of sites, the letting of contracts, and the actual work of construction." The hard-boiled engineers conclude that it will "tax to the utmost" the ability of

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governmental agencies to use the amounts already appropriated "with sufficient promptness to materially relieve the present economic situation" in less than two or three years. The report will be a bitter pill for Mr. Hoover and the other proponents of salvation through public works.

EUROPEAN CRITICISM of the United States since the World War has never, or at least until just recently, been wholly sincere. There has always been a sneaking respect for that idol beloved of most Americans called prosperity. Our wealth and our seemingly limitless capacity for increasing that wealth placed us on a high pedestal, and most Europeans, whether they liked it or not, envied us our lofty position. Not so today, however. The economic crash has reduced us to the level of more common clay. Fortunately for us, the unreal fawning which marked much of European criticism before our prosperity has not been replaced entirely by gratuitous sneers of the Mussolini variety. A good deal of the new criticism has been honestly and helpfully analytical. It has sought to understand our difficulties and it has discovered, what has been known to most intelligent Americans, that public and big-business leadership in this country is bankrupt. Fritz Neisser, economic correspondent in New York for the *Berliner Tageblatt*, has thoroughly explored this problem and has come to the same conclusion. In a recent dispatch to his newspaper he reviewed the attempts of the Hoover Administration to minimize the significance and extent of the depression, he revealed in brief but effective fashion the hopelessly feeble efforts of the government and big business to deal with the situation, and he closed with a devastating reference to Mr. Hoover's own confession that the whole problem must be left to work out itself. Herr Neisser has done a great service by revealing to Europe, which is said to be looking to the United States to lead it out of the depression, that neither the rulers of America nor Mr. Hoover can be depended upon to supply the necessary leadership.

FROM 1928-29 TO 1929-30 world cotton consumption declined by 653,000 bales, but world consumption of American cotton fell off by no less than 2,053,000 bales, consumption of other growths increasing by 1,400,000 bales, according to figures supplied by the International Cotton Federation. Students of the cotton situation declare that United States government stabilization operations have driven the cotton merchants largely out of the market, while mill men, in the face of unaccustomed marketing conditions, hesitate to buy except for immediate use. The government holds a huge stock of cotton as well as of wheat which hangs threateningly over the market. The pegged price of wheat at the same time is making it increasingly difficult to export flour, and the whole marketing situation is thrown into the utmost confusion. It is hard to see any but a political reason for continuation of a policy whose economic and financial results have already proved so disastrous.

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT is not altogether happy over the report of the St. Lawrence Power Commission. The commission recommends the creation of a Power Authority with the legal and financial powers necessary to negotiate with the federal government and Canada and to construct the power plant. It recommends that the Power Authority trustees arrange for the transmission and distribution of the power by existing utility companies under a carefully drawn contract. In a minority report former Lieutenant Governor Conway advocates equipping the Power Authority specifically "with authority for construction, maintenance, and operation of its own transmission lines and also of distributing systems so far as may be necessary." He also wants the exclusive right of the trustees to fix rates expressly embodied in the contract. The contract plan of utility control has its advantages, and in this case it would save the cost of building transmission lines, but it is hard to see that it will give the Power Authority effective rate control, and it will certainly not give the State such liberty in rate-making as would be possible under independent State transmission. The Niagara Hudson Company, with its widespread system of transmission lines, is in a position of great advantage for distributing the power cheaply, which fact seems to have led the majority of the commission to favor private transmission. If any contract is to be made, its conditions should be such as to assure the benefits of that cheapness to the consumer.

ON MARCH 13, 1930, the New York Appellate Division removed Magistrate Vitale from office on charges growing out of the famous dinner given to the Magistrate when a detective lost his pistol to a naughty hold-up man. Since that day in March three magistrates have resigned under fire, another has been relieved of his duties pending his trial for buying his job (which trial has just ended in a disagreement), the grand jury is still in session to complete its investigation of the conduct in office of another magistrate, a Supreme Court justice has disappeared without a trace, and various nasty facts have come to light about the procedure in the magistrates' courts during the trials of women accused of soliciting. At this point in the current annals of a Tammany-run New York, Mayor Walker is described as on the verge of a complete nervous breakdown and in imperative need of a long, long rest. If the Rockefeller Institute, which has been making a thorough examination of Mr. Walker's condition, finds his blood pressure so low that it would endanger his health to continue his work, we cannot question a disinterested scientific opinion. But it is all the more unfortunate for Mr. Walker, for surely no nervous breakdown was ever more ill-timed. The Mayor is reported to be determined not to seem to run away while certain sections of the city administration are under such a cloud. He may well hesitate. Nobody begrudges the Mayor of New York a vacation; nobody wants Mr. Walker to work if his health demands that he rest. But the matter would have worn a better face if he had appeared to take the New York scandals a little more seriously instead of consistently minimizing them almost to the point of denying their existence.

EUROPEAN STATESMEN have again strikingly demonstrated their adherence to the strange belief that effective peace machinery can be built upon fear and suspicion. At the moment these statesmen are at work on M. Briand's plan for creating a United States of Europe. We understood that the plan was designed to bring the several nations of Europe into some sort of union in the interest of economic and political peace. As we rather

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naively saw it, the goal could be attained only by tactful and sincere cooperation. This view now appears to have been incorrect. A European union, according to the evidence on display in Geneva, is obviously more readily to be had by suspecting one's neighbor's motives or by playing on his fears. Thus were Russia and Turkey barred from the deliberations, although the technical ground given was their lack of membership in the League of Nations. At the recent Geneva session Germany and Italy joined in asking that Russia and Turkey, important European countries, be invited to take part in the negotiations. One might have supposed that Briand, father of the plan for a United States of Europe, would have given this request his most earnest consideration. Instead, he hastened to voice his suspicion that Italy and Germany, acting together as they did, were engaged in some deep-dyed plot aimed at France. He directly charged Foreign Minister Curtius of Germany with having forsaken France for Italy. He demanded that Curtius explain the meaning of this move. And the wonder of it all is that Briand is still confident of getting somewhere with his United States of Europe idea.

EXPOSURE by a League of Nations commission of an officially sponsored slave system in Liberia, coupled with Secretary Stimson's criticism of the officials responsible, has had immediate results. It has focused attention on the whole slavery problem, which in its turn promises to lead to definite action at Geneva. More encouraging, so far as Liberia itself is concerned, is the proposal for the correction of the Liberian situation set forth in an article by Raymond Leslie Buell in the *Christian Science Monitor*. Mr. Buell is an authority on certain African problems. His book, "The Native Problem in Africa," has been credited with being directly responsible for the League's report on Liberia. Reviewing the situation, he comes to the conclusion that the United States and the League should cooperate in remedying Liberian conditions. He recalls the success of the League in supervising Austrian and Hungarian financial affairs, but urges in the case of Liberia that the proposed supervision be extended to include education, health, public works, and native agricultural development. The reconstruction, Mr. Buell suggests, cannot be carried out unless the United States is willing to make some sacrifices. The program will call for an examination into the relations between the Firestone interests and the Liberian government, in which the Firestone loan, placing an "onerous interest burden" on Liberia, plays an important part. State Department officials, surprisingly enough, look with some favor upon the Buell proposal.

THE VESTAL COPYRIGHT BILL, which was passed by the House of Representatives on January 13, is not an entirely satisfactory measure, since it still continues some absurd restrictions on the importation of foreign books, but it nevertheless registers a notable advance in the legal protection which it accords to American authors, playwrights, artists, and composers. Under the present law, copyright protection runs for twenty-eight years with the privilege of extension for a similar period. The Vestal bill makes copyright automatically effective upon the creation of a work, and extends the protection for the author's lifetime and fifty years thereafter. It further permits the creator of a work to divide his copyright, as the present law does not, and to convey full legal title to the purchaser of serial, motion-picture, translation, or other rights. At the present time such rights may be reserved by the author or relinquished to him by the publisher or producer, but the full copyright protection still inheres in the first publisher or producer of the work. The bill has the further advantage of facilitating the entrance of the United States into the International Copyright Union, thereby giving the holder of an American copyright full legal protection, without further formalities, in the thirty or more countries that are members of the union. As American membership in the union must be accepted not later than August 1 next, every effort should be made to secure favorable action on the bill by the Senate before that time.

AFTER A BARE SIX MONTHS of organized war against the theater-ticket speculators in New York City, the League of New York Theaters has decided, at least for the present, to give up the ship. Harlow D. Savage, executive secretary, resigned on January 13. Dr. Henry Moskowitz, adviser to the league, announced that its affairs would be cleaned up and that its next program would include the study of stage censorship. Presumably the good old days are already back again, hardly any tickets for good shows will be on sale at the box offices, and would-be theatergoers are to have the privilege of paying a speculator anywhere from $5 up for $3.50 seats. When the New York public gets tired of paying exorbitant prices to see a play, it will stop paying those prices. When tickets can no longer be sold at a price far in advance of what is marked up over the box-office window, the price will go down. Meanwhile, in a bad season, the producers can only pray that with the old system of a "buy"—whereby a speculator pays cash in advance of opening for a large block of seats for six weeks or so—business will improve. When it is recalled that the League of New York Theaters was organized because business was so bad, the chances for improvement are not too bright.

BY THE DEATH OF ALLEN JOHNSON, editor of the "Dictionary of American Biography," who was struck by an automobile and fatally injured on January 18 in Washington, American letters suffers a severe loss. Mr. Johnson had been professor of history at Yale when he resigned to take over the editorship of the dictionary, but it was for his admirable work as editor of the "Chronicles of America" that the Council of Learned Societies made him their choice in 1926 to record American biography. He had been in communication with scholars all over the country; this acquaintanceship served him well in his new post, and he insisted besides, not only that the articles be written by the best available person, but that they be well written as well as accurate and complete. The volumes of the dictionary which have appeared so far have been not only admirable in content and tone but have made really interesting reading. All the more pity, therefore, that Mr. Johnson cannot continue the work that was being carried on so well. It will go on, of course, with a new editor and with the help of an able and hard-working staff. And one of their saddest duties will be to include Mr. Johnson's own biography.

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A Party for the People

THE Republican Party is the party of privilege. Its weaker twin, the hybrid Democratic organization, differs from the G.O.P. only in that its desire to become the party of privilege has never been satisfied. It is willing to sell its soul at any time for the financial favors big business has to bestow on its political servants, as was pointedly shown in the Alton B. Parker campaign of 1904 and as has recently been revealed once more in the tilt between John J. Raskob, principal owner of the Democratic Party, and Frank Kent, defender of the Hoover faith. Essentially there is no difference between these two major parties except that the bankers and business men have found the Republicans more dependable.

The owners of the two major parties get what they want because they have the immense power that wealth confers upon them; because they are articulate, controlling as they do most of the press, the radio, the movies, and other machinery that molds public opinion, and because they understand the value of organization. They get what they want, but how about the ten million farmers, the three or four millions of organized workers (most of whom are decidedly not satisfied with the scraps the American Federation of Labor can wheedle out of big business by its compromising and groveling attitude), the many more millions of unorganized wage-earners, and the still other extensive groups of small business men, shopkeepers, clerical workers, professional people, and domestics? There is nothing whatever to indicate that they derive any immediate benefits from the governmental activities of the two major parties. The indirect benefits that come down to them are at best only incidental. These cannot be disregarded as having no value, but the vast classes of inarticulate persons must accept them exactly as they are received. They have no control over the nature or extent of these indirect benefits, because their political representatives work, not for them, but for the big-business owners of the political parties.

There is, for example, the plight of the farmers. In the 1928 campaign the Republicans vaguely promised them assistance through tariff manipulation and by other means. What happened? A tariff bill was passed that went through the meaningless gesture of protecting American farm products but at the same time raised the rates on many things the farmers must buy. A Federal Farm Board was established, and this organization is now in the process of gambling away $500,000,000 of the taxpayers' money in the vain hope of bolstering up grain prices. But instead of grain prices being held up they have fallen far below the 1928 levels, and hundreds of thousands of farmers are in want or near the point of starvation as a result of their faith in Republican promises.

What have the other unrepresented classes to expect? One may look to the power interests for one answer. The power trust is in control in Washington. Its control is not complete, but it has the White House, which is essential. It can hardly be said that the power trust is interested in lowering the cost of electricity to the small householders and shopkeepers. Indeed, its activities look the other way, toward higher rates and increased protection for its profits and dividends. Another answer comes in connection with what President Hoover has or rather has not done to relieve or assist the workers in the present crisis. He asked a few business men not to cut wages, but they, the owners of the Republican Party, have been doing it under one guise or another ever since. What more could have been expected from a President who believes that any reasonable move toward helping the victims of the depression constitutes "playing politics at the expense of human misery"? But the most discouraging answer is the success the party leaders have had in selling the prosperity myth to the public.

It has become accepted theory that unless business is prosperous the rest of the country cannot prosper. Hence all the other economic groups, who do not directly share in the dividends of big business, must do nothing whatever, and most particularly must they refrain from attempting to advance their own interests, lest business be disturbed. It is not that the other groups do not want prosperity, but that they ought to have it on terms that will provide for more equitable distribution of its costs and benefits. This they cannot have unless they are given some voice in the shaping of conditions that make for prosperity. At present business interests are considered first in this connection, and the other groups are thought of, if at all, only in passing. What do we find the two major parties advocating in this unprecedented era of Hooverized depression? Simple and in the larger sense meaningless remedies that will tide us over (or at least the more fortunate of us) until prosperity returns. "Rugged individualism" must be preserved in the interest of the rugged individuals. Nothing must be done to disturb business. "Economic wounds must be healed," according to Mr. Hoover, by "the producers and consumers themselves." Not a single suggestion has come from either of the two parties looking toward any sort of social planning that might help us overcome the most glaring and unnecessary defect in our economic structure, that of recurrent periods of depression, or any of its many other deficiencies. The rugged individual can build up huge reserves against hard times, but how about the factory worker, the stenographer, the bookkeeper, the tenant farmer, the small householder? They must live off their savings, such as they are, or go prowling for food in the streets.

These great classes of producers cannot escape their fate by clinging to the two old parties. They must realize that their primary interests are not only distinct from, but directly in conflict with, the interests of the owners and managers of the major parties. They must organize in defense of their interests. They must, in short, become class conscious. This is the task to which the progressive and radical leaders of the country should address themselves. They must awaken these great classes to the realization that the Republicans and Democrats, and their financial masters, are opposed to them on every public question of the day. Until this is done there is small hope of launching an independent political movement that will give these classes a voice in the government at least equal to that of big business.

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Pity the Poor Reds

PITY the poor Communists in America. Representative Fish, chairman of the red-hunting committee (called red-herring committee in Washington), has just had at them to the extent of 30,000 words. His revelations are startling, world-shaking, his conclusions and recommendations no less so. His report proves conclusively and apparently for the first time (or is it really the first time?) that there are a number of persons in this world who call themselves Communists and that some of these persons are at work in the United States. The report goes further and establishes beyond fear of successful contradiction that the reds do not like capitalism, that they abhor the present form of the United States government, and that they want to see the current political and economic show wiped out by a world revolution. This is, indeed, astounding and unexpected news.

Nevertheless, the report does have some value, perhaps not for the average American citizen, but certainly for the "Masters of Moscow" and their humbly obedient slaves in this land of rugged individuals. The next time Mr. Stalin calls one of his American agents to Moscow to reprove him for stalling on the job, the agent can simply hand him a copy of the Fish report. It offers the most eloquent rebuttal to the Comintern's ceaseless criticism of the ineffectiveness of American communism that has come within our ken in many a day.

Moscow may think there are only ten or twelve thousand Communists in this country, but Mr. Fish's committee has found that "there are possibly 500,000 or 600,000 Communists and active sympathizers in the United States." Moscow may be impatient because its representatives here are producing no tangible results, but Mr. Fish has learned that the Communists constitute a "real threat" among the "textile workers, clothing, garment, and needle workers, fur workers, food workers, shoe and leather workers, coal miners, metal workers, lumberjacks, building trades, and marine workers, and to a lesser degree among employees in rubber factories, and in automobile and automobile-body plants." Nor does Mr. Fish ignore the Communist press. He lists by name and gives the circulation of each of the red dailies, weeklies, and monthlies in the United States. He also reveals the names of the various red labor and fraternal organizations. It is all a very realistic and impressive review of Communist activities in this country. *Pravda* and *Izvestia* of Moscow can certainly use this material to convince the doubting Thomases at home that the world revolution is making deep inroads in the most capitalistic country on earth.

Mr. Fish has made a number of other notable discoveries too numerous to mention here. We refer those sufficiently curious to the report itself. It makes interesting, if not particularly enlightening, reading. While Mr. Fish may really have been seeking to convert Congress by the imposing array of facts and figures, partly stale and partly imaginary, that he has jammed into his report, we feel that he has also used the data contained therein as a vehicle for transferring the fight against communism from the plane of politics and economics to that of religious fear and racial prejudice. Mr. Fish gratuitously refers to the fathers of communism, Marx and Engels, as "two apostate Jews," thus slyly suggesting not only a non-American origin, but that communism was founded by two men who were traitors to their religion. The report states that the movement is largely in the hands of persons "of Jewish origin"; that its followers are aliens who "speak English with an accent, if at all," and that it advocates mixed marriages. Mr. Fish declares "hatred of God and all forms of religion" to be the first goal of communism and by quoting Matthew Woll, the renegade labor leader, he implies that Communists have no sense of ethics and therefore presumably are not to be trusted.

It was inevitable that Mr. Fish should ask that these ungodly and untrustworthy persons be driven from the country. If Mr. Fish would now devote as much energy and devotion to the task of driving out the causes that produce communism, we should not only forgive him his stupid and perhaps dangerous effort to stir up religious, racial, and class hatred against the Communists, and his waste of thousands of dollars of the taxpayers' money in "discovering" facts that have long been known to all newspaper readers, but we should also hasten to acclaim him for having courage to undertake a task so shamefully abandoned by the Herbert Hoovers, Charlie Schwabs, Owen Youngs, Joe Robinsons, and Jim Watsons of this country.

The Indian Conference

THE practical results of the Indian Round Table Conference are probably best summed up in the report of the committee on federal structure given out by Lord Sankey on January 12. The complete text is not yet available but according to cabled reports it is a delicately balanced composition of which the main theme and countertheme may be stated as follows: Responsibility for the federal government of India will in future rest upon the Indians themselves, *subject to certain special reservations.* The report goes on to outline the form and functions of the new constitution, and though lack of space prevents any detailed examination here, certain important points may be cited as indicating its general burden. Executive power is to be vested in the viceroy. He will appoint a prime minister who will choose his own cabinet. Ministers may retain office, however, only with the confidence of the legislature. Administration, financial and otherwise, of the army and foreign affairs is left entirely in the hands of the viceroy; the Indians are to have control over internal finance; but the viceroy may intervene when the credit of India seems to him likely to be prejudiced in the world money market. Finally, wide powers are available to the viceroy through his veto over legislation and by reason of such reservations as the following: ". . . in certain specified situations which may arise outside the sphere of these subjects [the army and foreign relations] the Governor General must be at liberty to act on his own responsibility and must be given the powers necessary to implement his decisions"; "in the event of a breakdown of the constitution adequate powers will have to be vested in the Governor General for the purpose of enabling the King's Government to be carried on."

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So much for London. What about India itself? The Congress Party led by Mahatma Gandhi is, according to the Simon report, the strongest political power in India. It was not represented at the conference. At present it is an outlaw organization with at least 30,000 adherents in jail. Yet its activities—the boycott, the no-tax campaign, the civil-disobedience movement in general—are certainly not decreasing either in volume or intensity. It is obvious to anyone who has kept in touch with the Indian press that the Congress Party can cripple the working out of any British scheme of government if it so chooses. That it will choose to do just that to the Round Table report as it now stands is a foregone conclusion.

Here is an impossible situation. Practically, the British must either break the power of Gandhi or obtain the co-operation of the Congress Party in framing the new constitution for India. The first alternative seems entirely beyond achievement. The second seems almost as hopeless as the first—but not quite. In London, on January 15, Lord Sankey in presenting his report said this, among other things:

> There is a story in our Bible that wise men came from the East. I see many sitting at this table. But there are many still left in India whose opinion and whose assistance is necessary to complete the work of this conference and to start the future government of India on proper and safe lines.

It is obvious that his words refer to Gandhi and the Congress Party. Moreover, persistent rumors have indicated that many of the Round Table delegates, British as well as Indian, realize that Gandhi's support must be obtained if any new constitution is to succeed. To that end various delegates urged both publicly and in private that all political prisoners in British India, including Gandhi, be released from prison. It is further suggested that the Round Table Conference be resumed in India and that Gandhi, having been released, be invited to attend. Prime Minister MacDonald, in closing the conference, took note of the first suggestion and promised amnesty, but only on condition that the civil-disobedience campaign cease—a condition which Gandhi would certainly refuse.

It has been said over and over again in London since the conference opened that the British at last realize that India must eventually govern herself. If it is true that Great Britain has undergone, if not the idealistic "change of heart" that Gandhi has so long and so often demanded, at least a change of mind based on consideration of British-Indian trade figures since the boycott began, it could find no better way of indicating that change than by an act of amnesty. But it must be unconditional. Only then would it furnish tangible proof which Gandhi and his followers might honorably accept that the British raj has a heart as well as a bankbook, that it can and will keep its promises, and that "safeguards" are not merely a device for keeping power. On such a basis negotiations might proceed with more faith on both sides.

Governments are notoriously shortsighted, and there is perhaps little likelihood that anything either so generous or so practical will take place, but it is to be hoped that by some such move Great Britain may make it possible for India to have her freedom and yet be spared a revolution even more disastrous to life and trade than the one now going on.

About the World

NEGLECTED by book-review departments for forty-six years, "The World Almanac," of which the 1931 edition is lately off the press, is one of the most fascinating volumes this side of Ripley's "Believe It or Not," which in fact it resembles. In a smallish book easily held in the hand are assembled 948 pages printed in six-point type which put to shame the compendiums of week-end reading so popular with our publishers.

It would be impossible even to hint at the riches which this amazing book contains. Take the letter "A," for example; look up a few of the 300-odd items, and you will have information on the following subjects: Absolute Zero; Academic Doctors' Hoods, Colors of; Acids, Corrosive, Treatment for; Actors and Actresses, Favorite; Adam, What Language Did He Speak; Admirals, Rear, U. S. Navy; Afghanistan; Agua Caliente Races; Alaska, Altitudes in; Alcohol, Production and Consumption of; Alfred B. Nobel Prize Winners; American Academy of Arts and Letters; Anniversaries, Wedding; Apple Tree and Its Leaves; Ascension; Ash Wednesday; Automobiles on Farms, Number of; Azerbaijan, U. S. S. R.

Nor is this a mere dry-as-dust notation of names, places, heights, and lengths. A little research brings out the interesting fact that although the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World have been added to by fourteen others that are placed all the way from Rome to Angkor, not one as yet is credited to the United States, or even, indeed, to the Western Hemisphere. However, in a long list of memorable dates, beginning with the Deluge in 4,000 B.C., we have the following item, nearly at the end:

> Late in October (1929) the prices of stocks began to go downward. . . . Thousands of speculators were ruined, scores killed themselves, and the whole course of life was changed for the losers in one of the greatest stock-gambling movements in modern times. . . . President Hoover appointed committees . . . vast sums were pledged . . . toward increasing employment and thereby quickening all forms of legitimate business.

The United States thus bears its share of memorable catastrophes if not of marvels. Let us note briefly the following items: Of eighty-six political assassinations listed since 1865 fifty-two occurred after the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo, or about 60 per cent in sixteen of the sixty-five years. The largest lighthouse in the United States is the White Shoal Lighthouse in Michigan, with 3,000,000 candle power; the largest in the world is the Cabo Sao Vicente light in Portugal, with 55,000,000 candle power. Of $150,000 in expense money paid to President Wilson in six years he spent only $91,662; of $125,000 paid President Coolidge in five years he spent $114,529. The fastest speed ever recorded by a pigeon in a race was 3,317 yards a minute, or only 203 yards less than two miles. Ambergris is a fatty substance found in the intestinal tract of diseased whales.

There may be citizens of the United States to whom all this information is well known; there may be others who do not want to know it. But for the vast body of us it is interesting, not to say instructive. Long life to "The World Almanac" for giving it to us.

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Can Germany Pay?

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

St. Moritz, January 2

CAN Germany pay the reparations demanded of her and her debt to the United States? Of course, Germany can. A pound of flesh can always be had if there is no convenient law or trick to prevent, or the debtor does not perish. If the Allies and the United States insist, Germany can be made to pay in the course of generations, even if its government takes advantage of the moratorium provided under the Young Plan—as it probably will. But the question which the nations involved should put to themselves today is not Can Germany pay? but Should Germany pay? Can they afford to let Germany pay them at the cost of further introducing into the currents of world trade an unnatural factor which beyond doubt has had its share in causing and prolonging the present world-wide industrial crisis? Can they permit Germany to pay them at a cost of still lower standards of living, of enlarging the risk of German economic collapse, of inviting revolution and chaos, of arousing a bitterer spirit of resentment and a hatred of those who are helping to force Germany into its present straits?

Yes, Germany can pay, and you will find foreign observers in Berlin, official and unofficial, who will undertake to prove it to you in marks and pfennigs. They scoff at the idea that it cannot, and declare that "if Germany gets away with this it will get away with anything." First of all they point to the totally unnecessary naval expenditures, including the latest appropriation for beginning a second "pocket battleship." The ships now built or building could not protect Germany at all and are therefore merely a concession to national pride and to the nationalistic desire to keep in existence a nucleus of ships and men for a future large navy. Then there are the military expenditures. They can well be cut—they have been steadily increased—especially if the Reichswehr be regarded, as it should be, merely as a national police force and not as an army for foreign wars—which it cannot be without tanks, heavy cannon, a huge fleet of airplanes, and poison gases. So far I am entirely with the critics. Here much money could be saved; but only the German pacifists and a few enlightened economists and editors are for it. Suggest such a thing—as I repeatedly have done—to the ordinary German and he recoils in horror. To him it means throwing Germany open to Polish invasion; even the fleet is eloquently defended upon that ground of the Polish menace.

But other cuts in German federal expenditure? They are neither as easily suggested nor as practical—in many cases they are open to grave question. The critics dwell upon the fact that the city of Berlin has just opened a marvelous new museum costing millions, which was ten years in building; that Berlin and many other municipalities have established since the war new parks, new municipal bathing places, great stadia for athletics, like the one at Frankfort-on-the-Main, and all sorts of recreation grounds, besides putting up model municipal apartment houses to accommodate at least four million people. Cynical foreigners cite the fact that the federal, state, and municipal theaters in Germany are run today at an annual deficit so huge that journalists are asked not to print it and it has not appeared in the German press. It runs into many, many millions of marks, quite a percentage of the annual cash tribute to the Allies. Belgian and French observers note these things and say: "That money is rightfully ours."

They are on much safer ground when they declare that if Germany increased its inheritance taxes to, say, the English level, it would largely increase its revenues and help to wipe out the remaining inequalities in wealth—there are still two thousand admitted millionaires in Germany. These advocates of exacting the pound of flesh also call attention to the fact that despite the bad times the dividends of 142 German companies recently studied by a Berlin banking house have decreased only from 6.57 per cent in 1929 to 6.26 per cent in 1930. This is to them proof that German industry is neither overtaxed nor overburdened. So is the fact that the Rheinmetall-Gesellschaft, with its gross income reduced from 56,000,000 to 45,000,000 marks, has none the less increased its charges for depreciation from 2,430,000 to 4,080,000 marks, and is still able to report a net of 1,920,000 marks as against 1,810,000 marks in the previous year. The directors of the Gutehoffnungshütte have just increased its dividend rate from 7 to 10 per cent. One single family, the Hamels, owners of two-thirds of the stock, received no less than 6,000,000 marks as against a beggarly 4,200,000 marks the year before—but one does not hear of any bonuses or exceptionally high wages for the workers of the concern.

Next the critics have seized upon a remarkable article by the Minister of Finance, Hermann Dietrich, which recently appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt,* entitled The Transfer Mechanism—an article hastily disavowed two days after publication. It seems that Herr Dietrich had promised an article to the *Tageblatt,* which received this one with his name attached and promptly printed it. Immediately it was explained that Herr Dietrich had not written it, that it was a memorandum prepared for him by some subordinate which the Finance Minister had not even seen. It was further declared that this memorandum presented only a one-sided view of the reparations payments. But the mischief had been done. The article was eagerly seized upon as showing that the necessary transfers under the Young Plan can all be made without disturbing trade; that there are automatic compensations and international financial readjustments which will easily take care of any situation that may arise. "There, you see," the cry went up, "the Reich's Finance Minister admits that the Young payments can readily be made without disturbance at home or abroad." To which the answer is that in the article itself it is stated that the mechanism described in it "must not be overloaded," and that if there should be a complete withdrawal of foreign credits the economic life of Germany would at once be "entirely paralyzed"; there would be a complete collapse of the whole internal banking and credit system and of the public finances. Elsewhere in this article there is reference to the immediately

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depressing effect upon the financial and economic situation of any home political development which might create anxiety or distrust abroad.

That there is room for further reforms than those embodied in the Brüning sanitation measures, just agreed to by the Reichstag after their proclamation by the President, is perfectly true. For example, the German government is by no means always efficient in the conduct of some of its multitudinous businesses. Thus, the Deutsche Werke in Kiel, a government concern, has just incurred a loss of 10,000,000 marks through faulty construction of two large ships built on order for a Norwegian shipping company. Arbitrators have decided that the ships must be taken back and that the German government must pay 6,000,000 marks to the Norwegians. The total loss will go to 10,000,000. One hears the same complaint among big business men here as in the United States—that when the government begins competing with private industry the losses and waste are great and the injury done to private enterprises serious. A writer in the *Tageblatt* declares that in certain of these government concerns the losses will run to many millions; that the government has tried making motor cars, windows, sashes, doors, and machinery of all sorts, always with losses and always hastily changing from one thing to another. Here again, critics say, a lot could be saved toward reparations.

The German League for Human Rights has still another and a most admirable suggestion for improving the condition of German finances—not, of course, because it wishes the reparations payments to continue, but because it wishes to aid in the solution of the terrible economic crisis. It urges the immediate lowering of all the German protective tariffs. One of the many grave derelictions to be laid at the doors of the Social Democrats is that they have connived at and aided in the development of the existing tariffs, which raise the cost of living to every German and, precisely as in the United States, take the form of special privilege for certain classes. In a notable address before the league on November 21, Dr. R. R. Kuczynski, well known in the United States as a statistical expert and a lecturer at the Robert Brookings Graduate School in Washington, D. C., pointed out some facts in regard to the working of the agricultural tariffs. He showed that the great agrarian interests, notably in East Prussia (which has really governed Germany for as long as our protected manufacturers have run our government), have received large government subventions and tax exemptions in addition to the high tariffs they demanded. These favors have annually cost the city consumers "several billions of marks." But the farming industry declares today that despite all this it is worse off than ever, that all these measures have helped not at all. Yet a ton of rye which could be bought last summer outside of Germany for 60 marks cost 180 marks in Germany—a gift by the government, through its tariff, of no less than *120 marks per ton* to each and every grower of rye. Similarly the coal syndicate charges 16.89 marks per ton at home and is now seeking to market coal abroad at 10 to 12.50 marks per ton. These are but two of many examples.

But granted the overwhelming benefits which abolition of tariffs would confer upon Germany, our question remains: Should Germany, even if aided by changes in fiscal policy and by more economical administration, still be compelled to pay the reparations?

My answer is, No. This is not because of a desire to see Germany wriggle out of obligations solemnly entered into; from the beginning I have felt that Germany ought to pay a reasonable and just amount for the actual destruction in France and Belgium. After studying the German situation at first hand for the last four months, my reasons for now believing more than ever in the desirability of canceling the reparations and debts are these:

1. While, as stated above, reparations are not a major cause of the present economic depression they are contributory, and they place Germany in the predicament of having to meet the world-wide crisis with this extra burden of approximately $500,000,000 a year in payments to the conquerors.

2. There is a limit beyond which no people can, in humanity, be depressed in their standard of living, and the bulk of the German people have reached that limit, with 3,750,000 registered unemployed and an additional multitude in the classes which do not resort to the public registry offices to seek the dole. Today no fewer than 16,600,000 Germans have an *annual income of less than 600 marks, or $150.*

3. If the German people are still further depressed economically there will inevitably come fiercer internal political conflicts, more and more rioting for food, and the strengthening of all the reactionary elements, especially the National Socialists, with probably a dictatorship to follow. It is all very well to tell a people to give up their museums, their parks, their theaters. But these are safety valves; they give the people something to live by, some intellectual stimulus, something to keep them from despairing. The cities must offer more to their inhabitants if only to offset the horrible depression caused by the unemployment, the bareness, and the hardships, the almost hopeless situation which every young German faces when he enters upon his business or professional career.

4. A disorganized Germany means a disorganized Europe, and a disorganized Europe means an economically maladjusted and depressed world, including the United States. So serious is the existing crisis that only shortsightedness amounting to criminal folly will counsel any policy which even remotely threatens the collapse of Germany.

5. The psychological effect of the canceling of reparations and debts upon the mentality of all Europe would be incalculable. In Germany it would go far to insure political stability, even if the direct economic results proved—as they would—not to be so great as the average German expects. It would stimulate trade, reassure capital, and stop its flight to Switzerland, Sweden, and Holland. It would give a breath of life to an all but perishing people which has just come through the sorriest Christmas since the war.

6. In good-will alone, wiping out the reparations would pay all the creditor nations in dollars and cents, and most particularly the United States. How many billions is the world losing annually by the present economic depression? Any sacrifices toward stopping the present fearful loss and the waste of the unemployed millions of workers will be money well expended.

As long as the reparations burdens continue, so long will Germany regard the rest of the world with the bitterness of one who feels himself gravely discriminated against. The German people are not unaware that since their representatives signed the Young Plan the changed financial situ-

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ation, because of the depreciation of gold, is compelling them to pay actually some 12 per cent more than they agreed to. It must not be forgotten that there has arisen a new generation in Germany which has no memory of the war, or only the vaguest; that these young men and women feel it to be a crime that they should be compelled to pay for the sins of a government dead twelve years, for a war in the making and waging of which they had no part whatever. The American public must not overlook the fact that it is precisely from this section of the German population that the National Socialists are drawing large numbers of recruits.

The enthusiasm of German youth for Hitler and his motley following is in considerable measure due to the fact that vague as their program is—it is as full of platitudes and glittering generalities as most of the speeches of Theodore Roosevelt and William J. Bryan—it is at least a program. And it conjures up a picture of a freed Germany, again mistress of its own house. German boys and girls are today craving leadership as perhaps never before. If they are to be driven permanently into the camp of the Hitlerites, it will be an ominous thing for Europe and the world for several generations to come—if Europe survives. It will inevitably mean the awakening of that fierce aggressive nationalistic spirit which French politicians say they gravely fear, and are doing all they can to produce—a spirit not existent in Germany immediately after the war and one far from controlling there today.

Germany wants peace. I called a couple of weeks ago upon a high financial authority in Berlin—one who still holds high office and wields great power. I wanted to talk finance with him, but he only wanted to talk *peace* with me. "Why can we not have peace in Europe? Why will not America now insist upon disarmament, a final settlement of the war issues, and of all the financial questions? As long as these things continue there will be and can be no peace in Europe, no security, no happiness. We are drifting steadily toward a new war and a catastrophe. Yet we Germans are absolutely desirous of peace—as we have just shown again in Geneva with no success and little support."

I repeat: Against this drift to chaos and misery every possible brake should be applied, and none could be so potent psychologically as the settlement of the reparations problem. It is the capitalist system which is on trial, which is at stake. If the capitalist governments continue to rule Europe as incredibly badly as they have done and are now doing, and Russia succeeds in her communist experiment, Moscow will not only be knocking at the gates of Berlin in a dozen years, as Professor Calvin Hoover wrote in the October issue of *Harper's Magazine,* it will be leveling every gate in Europe. Talk of the menace of Russian dumping! Why, that is but a speck upon the horizon compared with the state of bitterness, of fear, of anxiety, of armament rivalry, and of trade warfare through protective tariffs, yes, the state of international anarchy which constitutes today what men call Europe.

The German statesman was right. Why does not America act? Why does not Mr. Hoover vision that before him lies today a most glorious opportunity to reestablish America in the position of moral leader of the world which it for a time held? Mr. Hoover! *Mr. Hoover!* Fate surely dealt the world a tragic blow when it placed him in the White House in this hour of extremest danger.

A Washington Honor Roll

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, January 17

ONLY a mining engineer could dig a hole as deep as the one into which our beloved President has finally got himself over the issue of drought relief. Observe his predicament and explain it if you can. Here is a man whose rise in politics is due almost solely to his success in persuading the government to appropriate millions for charity to be dispensed by him in foreign countries. And here, as President of the United States, we find him locking horns with Congress on the question of appropriating for the relief of suffering in his own country a sum which amounts to about one-and-one-half times the cost of modernizing one battleship! A larger sum was refunded this week to a single rich taxpayer. From Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and a dozen other States come harrowing descriptions of women and children herded into schoolhouses to keep warm, of families existing on four dollars a month, of bread lines, soup kitchens, and God knows what other pitiful makeshifts against starvation; while the Great Humanitarian stubbornly insists that a government loan of $15,000,000 to feed starving Americans is repugnant to his principles. It is fantastic that a man of Hoover's record should have raised such an issue. It is incredible that anyone with the political experience of a precinct committeeman could contrive to get on the wrong side of such an issue. Of course, Mr. Hoover never had the political experience of a precinct committeeman, but what of his celebrated humane instincts? Alas, it seems they are reserved for that small but worthy class made up of the 511 individuals who in 1928 paid taxes on an aggregate net income of $1,108,000,000. Any adequate relief program would necessitate an increase in the taxes of the impecunious 511, which, to a humane Administration, is out of the question. In other words—why add to the existing destitution?

* * * * *

EACH passing day magnifies the need of an extra session of Congress. About six weeks of the present session remain. No candid person contends that this is adequate for the consideration of matters that require it. It is not adequate even for the proper scrutiny of routine appropriation bills. The very business interests that are supposed to dread an extra session are clamoring for legislation that would consume months of hard work. The railroads are demanding regulation of buses and pipe-lines. The timber, manganese, oil, and communications industries are yelling their heads off for Congressional attention. And, of course, over and above all this there remain Muscle Shoals, the Wagner un-

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employment bills, the "lame-duck" amendment, and the anti-injunction measure. Seldom has there been such legislative congestion or such an imperative demand for prolonged and intensive legislative action. The "business man's" widely advertised fear of a special session is, in my opinion, largely a myth. Business men habitually curse Congress in an abstract, impersonal way, but at bottom they have much confidence in its collective wisdom and experience, and they have almost none in Mr. Hoover's. A similar state of mind exists among Democratic leaders and is responsible for their determination to adjourn March 4. Confidently believing that the President if left alone for nine months would succeed only in making bad conditions worse, they are resolved not to let him avail himself of the old familiar Presidential excuses, "Congressional interference" and "Senate obstruction." A similar motive can be detected among the Old Guard. Realizing that the renomination of Hoover in 1932 probably will mean Republican defeat, they desire to give him enough rope to hang himself so thoroughly that he will recognize the inevitable and step aside for—well, Dwight Morrow, perhaps. If Mr. Hoover knew his stuff he would be demanding a special session.

* * * * *

IT is no accident that the propaganda mill of the power trust is grinding at high speed these days. It is no inadvertence when selected radio speakers fill the air with the old discredited lies about the Ontario's famous Hydro and other publicly operated systems. Despite the fact that Hoover's in the White House and Wilbur's in the Interior Department, all is not well in the world of the "power boys." And their alarm is warranted. Now that such great constitutional authorities as the Washington *Star* and the Providence *Journal* have decided that the Senate had no legal right to recall the confirmation of George Otis Smith, Marcel Garsaud, and Claude L. Draper of the Power Commission, some may regard that particular issue as closed. Perhaps the superannuated reporters and copyreaders who serve as legal experts on so many of our metropolitan editorial pages may be presumed to have more knowledge on the subject than Tom Walsh, Norris, Borah, Bratton, Wagner, George, and the rest of the forty-four Senators whose number includes the chairman and a majority of the Judiciary Committee and three or four former justices of State supreme courts. But the issue is not closed. Thanks to the indecent haste of the commissioners in dismissing two faithful officials and to the blundering of President Hoover and Secretary Wilbur (who is the man immediately behind this business), the public is at last awake to the nature and importance of the power question. The flood of letters pouring in on Senators who voted for the recall shows how quick and complete the awakening has been. Talk about the Senate invading the President's prerogative is a smoke screen. As to that point, the Constitution expressly gives the Senate power to make its own rules, and it is not denied that it acted within its rules. The contention that the unauthorized action of the executive clerk in notifying the President before the legal period elapsed was sufficient to foreclose the Senate from exercising its right to reconsider, sounds pretty flimsy to me, but since I am neither the United States Supreme Court, the Lord God Almighty, nor a New York *Times* editorial writer, I shall not attempt to decide the legal question. It is not the issue. It is notorious that the executive department under this Administration has gone to shocking lengths to break down the Federal Water Power Act. It is notorious that Solicitor Russell and Accountant King were fired because they had striven to enforce the act by exposing the efforts of power companies to water their valuations with such items as neckties, banquets, propaganda expenses, special cars, and similar examples of "investment costs." Consequently, the issue is whether the policy laid down by Congress in the Water Power Act is to be carried out, or whether the act itself is to be nullified by the rulings of administrative officers. In short, it is whether the Power Trust is to be given immunity under the law to continue robbing the consumers of electricity. I think the public understands it. The "power boys" think so too. If anyone doubts that, let him ask a power magnate what he thinks of Mr. Hoover's handling of the matter. But wear ear muffs.

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THE refusal of the Hearst, Scripps-Howard, and other independent dailies to join in the sycophantic orgy of President-petting and Senate-baiting which attended the power controversy, and their realistic perception of the issues involved, are enough to hearten any newspaperman who cares for the honor and influence of his profession. Incidentally, the moment seems opportune to repeat my ancient annual custom by presenting my own Honor Roll of Washington correspondents for 1930. The flowers are distributed as follows:

WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR., of the New York *World*, for discovering and exposing the act of the newly appointed Senator Grundy in moving his private tariff lobby into the Senate office building.

RUTH FINNEY, of the Scripps-Howard papers, and MARION L. RAMSAY, of Universal Services, for their intelligent and persistent reporting of the numerous phases of the power battle.

M. FARMER MURPHY, of the Baltimore *Sun*, for his brilliant and devastating stories on the trading and chicanery which attended the progress of the tariff bill in the Senate.

RAYMOND P. BRANDT, of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, for exposing the character and history of Secretary Hyde's adventure in mutilating the Pure Food Act by his corn-sugar ruling.

D. HAROLD OLIVER and MARGUERITE YOUNG, of the Associated Press, for exceptional examples of competent and thorough straightaway reporting on delicate subjects under trying circumstances—Mr. Oliver on the tariff; Miss Young on communications, power, and railroad consolidation.

WILLIAM HARD, of the Consolidated Press Association, for his courage and independence in renouncing a profitable intimacy with the White House when it became apparent that he could no longer maintain it without losing his professional self-respect.

ALFRED D. STEDMAN, of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press*, for his expert reporting of the intricate operations of the Farm Board.

ROBERT B. ("RED") SMITH, of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, for the indomitable courage, humor, enthusiasm, and faith that he has maintained through a sea of physical troubles and professional trials.

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I'm Tired of Beans

By WORKLESS

WERE I ever to acquire wealth, or else were I ever fortunate enough to get a job, I should swear off beans for the rest of my natural days. I simply detest those tiny, white, innocent-looking vegetables—and I'll tell you why. I am one of the white-collar unemployed. I have been out of a regular job for two years. In addition, I am nearly forty, scandalously bald-headed, and conspicuously Jewish—all of which attributes are not the least bit helpful when "youth," "pleasant appearance," and "engaging personality" are rigorously demanded by potential employers in the newspaper want ads.

During the early part of my enforced loafing experience I felt morose and almost beaten after the weary days and weeks of tramping the streets looking for jobs. I faced the morrow with an increasing sense of helplessness. Not so, now. For since unemployment has become a recognized national problem, and so many agencies are exerting themselves in their efforts to relieve the unfortunate jobless, it has become almost a distinction to be classed as one of the brood about whom there is so much ado. This is particularly true of the unemployed who are heads of families. It is they, especially, who incur the sympathy of the soft-hearted society matrons, benevolent church committees, community councils, and neighborhood politicians.

I am blessed with an intelligent and loyal wife who contributed considerably toward the family support in her capacity of saleswoman at a time when the public's buying mood was not so "depressed" as it is at present. I am still further blessed with three bright and understanding children of school age—innocent victims of a trying epoch. I have used the term "blessed" advisedly, because it leads up to my peculiarly favored position as a recipient of unemployment relief. It leads up as well to my eventual aversion for beans.

During the latter part of the summer of 1930 conditions became so grave that my little family actually faced starvation. As the food diminished, the children's appetites grew in proportion. They craved fruit, vegetables, and sweets, which we could not supply. Also, as the children's appetites magnified, the unpaid rent bill assumed greater dimensions. While I succeeded in stalling the children's desires with painted illusions of a better future, that technique did not work quite so well with the landlord.

In utter despair, and motivated by the instinct of mother-love, my wife confided our plight to a fashionable lady of the neighborhood whom she had previously met. The neighbor was filled with sympathy and anxious to help. But how? My wife suggested that to secure a job for her husband was the only way to solve our difficulties. Just anything to do, it did not matter what—bookkeeping, clerking, window-washing, yard-cleaning—anything that would help buy food and pay the rent.

To help secure work, however, was the one thing the kind lady could not do. Conditions were bad, and growing worse. There were no prospects of jobs of any kind. But the next day a basket of food was brought to our home. We suspected where it came from. Tears came into our eyes at the thought of having to depend for our food upon friendly and solicitous neighbors, but depressing as the thought was, the contents of the basket were comforting. There were fruit, vegetables, meat, canned goods, and a considerable quantity of beans packed in neat white packages. We fed on the more attractive food and stored away the beans for a rainy day.

Meanwhile the schools had reopened, and my good wife was making an effort to secure free lunches for our children. To accomplish her end, she had to address, as a matter of course, the chairman of the Parent-Teachers Association, a woman coreligionist of extraordinary kindness and influence. Learning of our sorrows, the good lady determined that we should not perish. And accordingly, a second basket of food entered our home. We were very thankful despite our reluctance to accept charity. It helped to keep the children fed and contented. It also helped to raise our spirits. After all, we thought, it was mighty good to experience genuine friendship.

The second offering, like the first, contained several parcels of assorted beans in addition to the other edibles. As the stock of beans accumulated in our otherwise empty pantry, we felt safe in our knowledge that the rainy days were well taken care of.

It was a teacher of the public school attended by my children who next discovered our state of affairs. She was good enough to investigate for herself by a visit to our home, and she assured us that she was actuated in her desire to aid as a devout Christian and active member of her church. We told her that a chance to work and earn a livelihood was the only thing we could ask of our friends. She departed and promised to do her utmost to alleviate our sufferings.

As our friends increased, we began to have some hope for an otherwise uncertain future. I registered at the governor's unemployment council, placed my name with the State free employment agency, and hunted down the want ads as religiously as ever. The newly acquired lady friends were also on the job, and had promulgated our "case" to the community Business Men's Association, the Jewish Synagogue of the neighborhood, and the Republican Ward Committee, all of which had organized committees for the relief of the unemployed. With so much effort being expended in my behalf, I felt sure of getting employment soon.

Several weeks passed. Now and then we received assurances from our friends that everything possible was being done to help us. We waited patiently. As Thanksgiving day approached, we were graciously informed that we were to have no cause to worry in the future, and that we should have something to be thankful for along with the other 120,000,000 Americans. The promise was kept. On Thanksgiving eve we were pleasantly surprised by the arrival of five or six baskets filled to the brim with a variety of food and delicacies. The abundance of food overwhelmed us. The Jewish Synagogue, the Protestant church, the Business Men's Association, the Parent-Teachers group, and the Republican Ward Committee all had done their share in bring-

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ing festive joy into our home. We managed, moreover, to consume all the perishable edibles before they could spoil. To brighten things further, the neighborhood clothing committee of the governor's unemployment council turned over for my use two renovated suits of clothing. It did not matter that they were ten sizes too large—I still have a feeling that they were owned by the late William Howard Taft. It was the spirit that counted.

As I reflect upon these events, I find it hard to comprehend the adaptability of the human mind to the trying circumstances of life. Six months ago my wife and I would have proudly turned down every offer of unearned material aid. It would have seemed insulting, painful, inconceivable. Yet here we were accepting food and clothing with a mute sense of satisfaction and without the least resentment. Was it evidence of moral degradation? Was it a confession of helplessness? As I reasoned it out with myself I thought that the world was full of luxuries and pleasures, abounding in food, music, laughter, sunshine. Were not we who were temporarily defeated in life's struggle for existence entitled to just a few of the crumbs of the world's splendor, no matter whence they came, no matter how?

And so, for two weeks or more, we gloated upon food. We had chicken and plum pudding, canned peaches, corn and peas, vegetables, fruit, and what-nots. The usual generous amount of beans in bags, tins, packages, and boxes we stored away in the pantry for future reference. Our children gained weight, and their erstwhile pale cheeks showed an encouraging pink. And didn't we still have our friends, the loyal, sacrificing strangers who spent tireless days and nights conferring, meeting, devising all kind of methods for the alleviation of the lot of the jobless. It was not their fault that jobs were impossible to get, that prosperity was not returning as rapidly as predicted. They meant well. The starving would be fed. The children would be cared for.

When, with all things material, our supply of food diminished we were not dismayed. We still had our plentiful supply of beans, ours to do with as we chose. My wife, excellent cook that she is, devised all sorts of culinary tricks with the little white vegetables. She managed to vary our dietary program daily. Beans with noodles, beans with rice, beans with barley, browned beans, stewed beans, bean pudding, bean croquettes, with sauce, without sauce, beans, beans, beans.

Perhaps because of the Christmas holidays and the New Year festivities our good loyal friends seem to have forgotten us. We cannot blame them. They are not responsible for our plight. Nobody is responsible. There are no jobs.

We still have a few beans. And as we eat them and look into the future we wonder what it holds for us. And I am certain of only one thing: if ever I get rich, or even if ever I get a job, beans will have no place on my menu for a long, long time.

A Jolt for High Light Bills

By VIRGIL MacMICKLE

OREGON'S smashing decision, at the November election, in favor of publicly owned and operated hydroelectric power may well have been one of the most significant events, politically and economically, to occur in America during the year 1930. Taken in conjunction with the somewhat similar result in the neighboring State of Washington, it was one of the most disastrous jolts ever dealt the private power groups, considering that these two States possess between them nearly one-third of the entire country's natural resources in potential hydroelectric power.

Politically, in Oregon, it marks the end of one era and the beginning of another. During the last quarter-century there has not been an election—city, county, State, or Congressional—into which the power octopus, to use a shopworn but precisely descriptive figure, has not thrust its tentacles to its own gain and the detriment of the people. It has never hesitated to use any or all of the time-honored means of political corruption, from bribery, booze, and sex intrigue to reputation shattering, against those whose souls it did not own in advance of election. During all that time only a bare handful of men in office, most of them too insignificant to count, have been able to maintain their political integrity, or, having maintained it through a single term, to be reelected.

There was, however, one very notable exception, the late State Senator George W. Joseph, a man whose splendid character, ability, and energy are not only made clear by his record and attested by the reluctant admissions, direct and tacit, of his enemies, but confirmed by the fact that he was returned to office as often as he cared to run, and could have won any position within the power of the people to bestow. Not all the efforts of the power concerns and other utilities could defeat or cow this man. And since the recent victory of the people in their long struggle to break the grip of the power interests was in such large measure the culmination and, in a way, the vindication of Joseph's unceasing personal efforts, nothing of truth will be lost and something of drama will be retained by presenting the facts of the struggle somewhat in terms of his efforts.

In 1928 the Pepco, or Portland Electric Power Company, the older of the two power concerns in Portland, was negotiating with the Northwestern Electric Company what these two companies euphemistically called a merger for more economic administration. There was no question that the merger would have effected economies. That these economies would have been passed on to the people was doubted by everyone familiar with the conduct of the two concerns. The Pepco had a practically perpetual franchise entailing no payment of taxes. The Northwestern, on the other hand, held a limited franchise, which was soon to expire, and was also liable for taxes. Senator Joseph demonstrated to the complete satisfaction of the voters that a merger of the companies would cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars and enrich the stockholders of the companies by that much. The proposal was snowed under.

The power companies gave Joseph the credit for their trouncing. One of their smoothest political manipulators

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admitted to the writer that Joseph had beaten them almost single-handed. More than that, the gentleman indicated the companies' respect for Joseph's integrity when he replied, in answer to the suggestion that they might have found it more economical to have slipped Joseph twenty-five or fifty thousand dollars to keep his mouth shut, that there was "not enough money in the United States to buy that little ——!"

That fight was only the first skirmish in Joseph's well-planned war on the power companies. He was determined to break their blighting control in all departments of the State government, executive, judicial, and legislative. According to his program, the existing public service commission must be abolished and the law under which it acts as an instrument for the imposition of extortionate rates on consumers must be replaced by rate-making machinery that should inevitably function in the interests of the people. More, the very constitution itself must be so amended that not one or all of these departments could ever again betray the common weal. Finally, one or more determined advocates of publicly owned hydroelectric power must, if possible, be sent to Congress.

In one of the most brilliant and bitter campaigns ever witnessed in Oregon he carried his program to the whole State. He was already supported and seconded by some of the ablest men in the State, and his announcement that he would seek the gubernatorial nomination in the primaries rallied to his cause literally thousands of volunteer workers. Democrats changed their registration to be able to vote for him in the primaries. The Democratic *Journal*, biggest evening paper, favored him as far as possible throughout the entire campaign. The Portland *Telegram*, another evening paper and a determined protagonist of public ownership and administration of hydroelectric power, devoted itself almost exclusively to Joseph and his program.

Meanwhile, the Pepco itself swelled Joseph's metropolitan popularity enormously, first, by raising its street-car fares from eight to ten cents on the pretext of needing the increased revenues to pay the higher wages demanded by its employees, and, secondly, by promptly and cold-bloodedly repudiating the wage raise. The Supreme Court also added fuel to the flame in the State at large by disbarring Joseph after what seems to have been originally a purely private row with one of its members. Later it made amends by hastening to expunge from the record all the charges against him when, within a month after the voters had nominated him by a decisive majority, he dropped dead.

The Republican State Central Committee then convened, and, while the majority of the populace still mourned the passing of this great leader of a great cause, proceeded to scrap the Joseph platform, and nominate by the condemned secret ballot its own chairman for the governorship. By that move it nearly wrecked the regular machine, for almost at once an indignant electorate held an independent convention, attended by nearly 5,000 voters, and unanimously nominated Julius L. Meier, lifelong friend and business associate of Joseph and an ardent supporter of his program, as its independent candidate. Thus, Mr. Meier, the president of the largest department store west of the Mississippi, was practically drafted to lead the power revolt.

In the November election Meier received more than twice as many votes as the "regular" Republican nominee, and thousands more than the latter and all other candidates combined, notwithstanding the desperate fight waged against him by the power concerns and allied utilities. To clinch the argument, the voters also passed by a margin of about 33,000 votes the "grange power district" amendment to the constitution, which makes it practically mandatory on the coming legislature to enact measures preserving in perpetuity to the people of Oregon their remaining unclaimed hydroelectric power resources and providing for their development and exploitation for the benefit of the people. The program also contemplates legislation to compel the private companies, under penalty of practically confiscatory taxes, to develop all claims on which they have already filed.

Majorities in both houses of the legislature either were elected on the same program or have subsequently pledged themselves to support it, while the same wave of protest against the private power interests carried Major General Charles H. Martin, retired, wet Democrat, into Congress from the overwhelmingly Republican district which includes Portland. The main plank of his platform was publicly owned hydroelectric power. Portland chose as commissioner, by the unprecedented majority of 50,000, Ralph C. Clyde, well-known advocate of public ownership.

Commissioner Clyde, the first to take office, has already translated the mandate of the people into effective action by filing upon two choice power sites for the city of Portland, to be followed by other filings as fast as possible. The Governor-elect has been working on measures designed to crystallize his program into law during the approaching legislative assembly—ably assisted by grange leaders, including Albert Slaughter, veteran drafter of fool-proof legislation, and Carey and Harlan, the engineers and rate experts who recently represented the people in presenting evidence and testimony against the Pepco before the Public Service Commission and who have furnished the statistical ammunition for the campaign from the very beginning. And Major General Martin, a man of wide and influential acquaintance in official Washington and of more than ordinary experience in dealing with the Congressional mind, is planning a determined campaign in Congress to secure federal aid in the development of the Columbia River, the greatest single resource of hydroelectric power in America, on which no electric current has yet been developed.

Of course, there is a possibility that the power trust may still be able to influence enough members of the Oregon legislature to obstruct the program. But in view of the recent emphatic tone of the electorate, a legislative bolt is extremely inadvisable, if not unlikely. Besides, Mr. Meier has just issued a public announcement to the effect that if the legislature attempts to mar the program in any single detail, he will go over their heads by calling a special election and placing the proposed legislation in its entirety directly before the people. That he will do just exactly that is not doubted by anyone who really knows him. Nor is it doubted that he will expose any such legislative skullduggery by every possible means of publicity, including the radio, which he used so effectively during the campaign.

The economic motivation of the Oregon revolt is not far to seek. The whole State was tired of having to pay extortionate power rates, and seriously alarmed over the fact that not only did the rates keep new power-using industries from locating here, but were actually forcing many of those already here to move to other States where power is cheaper. The howls set up by Mr. Average Citizen might not

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have been effective. But when business which is dependent upon industrial pay rolls sees those pay rolls menaced, it becomes very active in seeking the cause, and vehemently articulate in demanding a remedy. This was precisely what happened in Oregon in general and Portland in particular.

Industries desirous of locating on the Pacific Coast, though finding all Oregon's other natural advantages entirely to their liking, were often compelled to locate finally in California or Washington because of Oregon's prohibitive power rates. California cities had low power rates, Washington cities still lower, those of Tacoma being the lowest of all. Thus, Portland lost a number of prospective industries to Los Angeles, Seattle, or Tacoma. The Hooker Chemical Company, for example, found that it could save $50,000 annually on power alone by going to Tacoma.

Why were the Portland rates so high? Certainly not because of a lack of available potential power. Including the Columbia River, which Oregon must share with Washington and which thus makes exact figures difficult to arrive at, Oregon has easily accessible to Portland from 6,000,000 to 8,000,000 constant horse-power of natural hydroelectric power resources, only 300,000 of which have been developed. The real reason was that Portland's power supply was privately owned and viciously exploited—was overcapitalized and underdeveloped. Take, for example, the Pepco plant at Oregon City, fourteen miles up the Willamette from Portland. The water rights cost the company practically nothing. Yet it has been allowed to capitalize those rights, exclusive of all plant costs, at about $8,000,000, according to Carey and Harlan. Under the law the company is allowed an 8 per cent return on that capitalization, and the public service commission has been practically compelled to fix rates at a level that would insure that return.

The huge capitalization would have been bad enough had all the potential power been converted into actual power and the burden of paying the return spread out over the whole output. But according to the same experts, only 18 per cent of the potential power has actually been developed, the other 82 per cent having been sold as plain water during the past fourteen years to the adjacent paper mills for the sum of $2,500,000, none of which ever went to lighten the rate burden of the consumer. In other words, the consumer had to pay such a rate on his electricity as would permit this 18 per cent of actual power to pay 8 per cent in dividends and interest on the whole volume of potential power. On the basis of actual output the rates should have been assessed on a valuation of $1,440,000 instead of the present $8,000,000, assuming even the former to be a legitimate and not a fictitious valuation; and the users should have been paying the company a total annual revenue from these particular water rights of $115,200 instead of $640,000.

The Pepco is not the only one. Another company has one 15,000 horse-power hydroelectric development the building of which cost $1,230,000. Yet its water site is capitalized at over $10,000,000. That is to say, $10,000,000 of fictitious value was placed upon the company's books for this small water-power site, and stocks and bonds were issued against it. Under such circumstances Oregon's high rates are easy to understand. What is more, under the present method of State regulation the companies have not only succeeded in obtaining a fair return upon this overcapitalization; they have also been able to force the ratepayers, through operating cost, to pay for such items as advertising, public-relations counsel, and even the propaganda designed to discredit public ownership.

Los Angeles, meanwhile, owned and operated one of the largest municipal plants in the United States. Seattle, starting with a relatively insignificant plant in 1902, would soon complete her Skagit project, giving her control of a million horse-power. Tacoma, which has owned its municipal plant for almost forty years, controlled more than 500,000 horse-power. And none of these projects had cost a single cent of additional taxes. All of them not only had paid and were paying their own way, but had succeeded so well that they could reduce their power rates to a point where they were now pulling the pay-roll industries away from Portland.

It was time to act. And Oregon has acted.

In the Driftway

GEORGE W. "Better-Known-as-Æ" RUSSELL, having attacked the great American pastime of moving to the city, has now turned his amiable guns upon that vice of ours which he calls "busyness." He hangs the responsibility for its inception on one whose beard was as venerable as his own, namely, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and he lays to that vice all our economic woes. But let him say it:

> I've a complaint against the United States. It arises out of Longfellow's "Psalm of Life." That poem is drilled in the schools into every child in the country. And they never forget it, especially the line "Let us then be up and doing," and America has been "up and doing" ever since it was published.
>
> That is the cause of all your economic problems. You are working people so hard that you have, naturally, overproduction. You should cultivate the adorable virtue of idleness. Your President and Congress ought to gather on the steps of the White House and formally extract that poem from Longfellow's works and burn it, and then erect a statue to idleness.

* * * * *

IT is doubtful whether "busyness" can be laid at the door of the mild and benevolent Longfellow—it is the Drifter's impression that his poem was written long after that awful moral dictum "An idle brain is the devil's workshop" had been engraved upon the American mind. But whoever invented it, busyness is a disease as infectious as it is fatal. If only everyone could be persuaded to spend less time "up and doing" and more time sitting down and, occasionally, thinking, the decrease in the number of bad books alone would be considerable. As for subway crowds, overpopulated cities, national advertising, and super-movies, they might disappear altogether in time. But "busyness" has become so securely fastened upon the American consciousness that it can be exorcised only by a long and patient struggle. The Drifter himself has almost overcome it. After extended practice he can let a railroad train leave him behind without lifting a foot to chase it. He has learned that things are

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as likely to come to those who wait as to those who run after them—including another railroad train. As for that "adorable virtue," idleness, which the American calls laziness, the Drifter is a past master in its rites. He can sit before a log fire for hours all alone doing nothing and yet experience no pangs of conscience nor feel that he has wasted time. Rather he is filled with a sense of well-being and a satisfying feeling that once more he has triumphed over the great American superstition that one must keep busy every minute or be miserable, not to say morally reprehensible.

* * * * *

WHICH leads up to the most ironical aspect of the cult of "busyness." The avowed object of the whole process is its very opposite, namely, leisure, or idleness. Many a young and energetic business man has assured the Drifter, when pressed, that he works hard not because he likes to work but because on the contrary he hopes to make so much money that he will have complete freedom from work later on. Leisure later on has become almost as much of a cult as busyness. But unfortunately one cannot learn how to be idle in a day. One must begin young and practice the art all one's life. Otherwise leisure will turn out to be merely boredom or a convenient opportunity for a nervous breakdown. We have hundreds of Schools of Business in this country. It is time we established a few Higher Institutions of Idleness, if only to relieve the strain upon our already overworked insane asylums.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

The Pershing Memoirs

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As one who served with General Pershing in France I am sorry that he is publishing what are given out as his memoirs of the Great War. I have just read the first instalment, and it left a bad taste. In the first place, at the very opening, he gives the impression that, instead of his being selected by the immortal Woodrow because of his particular fitness, his father-in-law, the late United States Senator Warren, chairman of the powerful Military Affairs Committee, was holding conferences with Secretary of War Baker, and at these conferences his name first came up.

Now, as a matter of fact it was no secret among Pershing's colleagues that perhaps Wilson and Baker were anxious to put him forward to head off the senior major general, the bumptious Leonard Wood, but the historian of the future will have Pershing's own record, even in mild form, to help clinch the fact that his being the son-in-law of Senator Warren, who was in a position to throw a monkey wrench at any time into the Wilson military program, or lack of it, probably was the influencing factor in his being named commander-in-chief.

In the next few lines Pershing tells how he became a fluent French scholar by spending a vacation in France in 1908. Now, everyone who was anywhere near the top knows that he never spoke French with any ease. Only three days ago one of Pershing's panegyrists, in telling of the meeting of Joffre and Pershing in Washington soon after Pershing's selection, said, "Joffre did not understand a word of English and Pershing did not understand a word of French," and so Joffre asked his aide, Fabry, to say to Pershing that he "liked him from the start."

But I think the prize observation of General Pershing's is contained in his positive conviction that the complete blame for the World War has long since been fixed by mankind "where it properly belongs, on the shoulders of the then German government." I thought the world was still giving serious study to this problem, and it seems to me not only a serious blunder, but exceedingly bad taste for a man who is himself of German extraction to put such language into what is being touted as the great and only real story of the war. Was it Napoleon who said that war is entirely too serious business for the army? For twelve years General Pershing has been writing and rewriting and revising proofs of this story, and yet he has apparently not been reading the disclosures that reputable historians have been making. If the future instalments are on a par with the initial chapter, the Pershing contribution to war history will take its place with most of the other memoirs and diaries of our de luxe generals.

DISGUSTED EX-COLONEL A. E. F.

Miami Beach, Fla., January 12

The Dear Ancestral Relics

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It may interest some of your readers to learn that one of the "backward States" inhabited by the "sons of wild jackasses" is coming to the front. In proof of this I quote a resolution recently adopted by the D. A. R. of the State of Wyoming and signed by Mrs. B. B. Brooks, wife of a one-time governor:

> *Resolved*, The Daughters of the American Revolution in conference assembled greatly deplore the growing communistic spirit in our public schools and higher institutions of learning; therefore be it resolved, that we recommend that the Oath of Allegiance to the National and State Governments be incorporated in the teachers' contract; and resolved, that a copy of this resolution be presented to the State Board of Education, and to the Board of Trustees of the University, and to the Commander of the American Legion.

It remains to be seen whether the Legion will or will not assist in the cause. But Legion or no Legion, we of the great State of Wyoming have a feeling of ineffable security. We need fear no Red Menace.

The national D. A. R. may blacklist a few educators. In Wyoming the Dear Ancestral Relics suspect them all. Have they not heard that the teachers are well read? Is not that enough?

Wheatland, Wyo., January 6 W. W. WOLFE

For California Readers

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The *Nation* Club of San Francisco will hold its third annual dinner in the Women's City Club, 465 Post Street, on February 12 at 6:30 p. m. Tickets are $1.50 per plate. The public is invited.

Paul Blanshard will be the chief speaker of the evening. His subject will be "International Economics and the Next War." All who are interested in making reservations may communicate with the secretary at 775 Guerrero Street, San Francisco.

SOPHIE GREENBERG, *Secretary*

San Francisco, January 10

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Books, Music, Drama

Descent from the Tower

By LESLIE NELSON JENNINGS

I

Solemnities of sifting from the chaff
Some golden grain of learning; the pursuit
Through dusty shelves of eighteenth-century calf
Of an elusive passage to dispute,
Became for him at last a more than cloak
Flung over fustian—the brown livery
Of an old vagabondage. When he spoke,
It was the accent of Authority.

But somewhere an invisible, tempered spring
Ran down or snapped, as though to prove the fact
That too much knowledge is a dangerous thing,
And books are books, however neatly stacked—
He found it more congenial to discuss
A penny whistle with Theocritus.

II

Yardsticks for Immortality fall short
Sometimes, and magic circles can be traced
By anyone who lightly will consort
With elder gods of laughter and unhaste.
Their signs are in the dust; where willows lean
Over the river reaches; near a hut
Where no one is remembered; in some green
Corner of Elfland or of Lilliput.

What is the stature of a man, unless
He stand no taller than a wooded hill,
Or give allegiance to a singleness
Greater than any labored act of will?
So measured, he can listen unchagrined
To the last words of earth and sun and wind.

Laski on Liberty

Liberty in the Modern State. By Harold J. Laski. Harper and Brothers. $3.

MR. LASKI'S opening sentence, wisely, is a definition: "I mean by liberty the absence of restraint upon the existence of those social conditions which, in modern civilization, are the necessary guaranties of individual happiness." Further: "By making liberty the absence of restraint, I make it, of course, a purely negative condition. I do not thereby mean to assume that a man will be the happier the more completely restraints are absent from the society to which he belongs."

To Mr. Laski the idea of liberty is intimately associated with the idea of equality, but he is careful to give the word equality a special meaning. Nothing is easier, he remarks, than to make equality seem a notion devoid of all common sense, as Mr. Mencken and Mr. Aldous Huxley have done. But Mr. Laski speaks of equality not as identity of talent, temperament, or treatment, but as "an insistence that there is no difference inherent in nature between the claims of men to happiness." In this sense equality is, so to speak, complementary to liberty, for the absence of equality means special privilege for some and not for others, a special privilege which is not, so to speak, in nature but in a deliberate contrivance of the social environment. The more equality there is in a state, the more use, in general, we can make of our freedom. In a chapter on Liberty and Social Power this idea is developed in its economic aspects. In a society where there is any serious inequality of economic condition the workers may almost be said to form a separate and subject nation. The rights of labor cannot receive real and full consideration, for a wealthy or relatively wealthy governing class always suffers from self-sufficiency. "It is inaccessible to ideals which originate from without itself. It tends to think them unimportant if they are urged tactfully, and dangerous if they are urged with vigor."

One cannot expect a writer on liberty to be entirely original. Mr. Laski's own justification for the present volume is that, because of the almost irresistible temptation to throw overboard the habits of tolerance in a time of crisis, it becomes necessary in each age "to restate the case for freedom." But a restatement implies a repetition. Whatever originality is open to a writer here lies mainly in the aspects of the problem that he chooses to emphasize, and in his position on certain specific issues. What is perhaps most arresting in Mr. Laski's discussion is his outspokenness regarding the extent to which he would permit freedom of utterance. If men believe even that violent and bloody revolution is desirable, he would permit them to say so, certainly through the printed word. He would even, under ordinary conditions, permit a speaker addressing a crowd to say so. He would admit the right of the government to take action against a speaker only if it were in fact demonstrable that the speech had "a direct tendency to incite immediate disorder."

I have no wish to argue with Mr. Laski's conclusions. I find myself, indeed, almost completely in agreement with them. But some of the arguments by which he reaches those conclusions seem to me questionable. Mr. Laski is in favor of permitting extreme utterances, for example, because

> It is the history of these matters that if governments once begin to prohibit men from seeking to prove in writing that violent revolution is desirable, they will, sooner or later, prohibit them from saying that the social order they represent is not divine.

This argument is clearly double-edged. Advocates of suppression may retort that it is the history of these matters that if you do not prohibit fundamental criticisms of the social order, the critics will, sooner or later, advocate and organize violent revolution. Mr. Laski later contends that the government "must not prohibit a meeting before it is held on the ground that the speaker is likely to preach sedition there." This position is thoroughly sound; but if governments were permitted to argue from "the history of these matters" rather than from the merits of the particular question at issue, they would find plenty of excuses for prohibiting suspected meetings.

Again, Mr. Laski is capable of contending that persecution of opinion is futile. "No technique of suppression," he writes, "has so far been discovered which does not have the effect of giving wider currency to the thing suppressed than can be attained in any other fashion." Mr. Laski is misled by isolated instances of particular books or plays. Certainly his generalization is not true of the technique of motion-picture censorship. And would he contend that knowledge of birth-control methods is more widespread than it would be if there were no laws against the dissemination of such knowledge? "Most people," he continues, "can see that Nero and Diocletian accomplished nothing by their persecution of Christianity." But was not this, as John Stuart Mill suggested, because the persecutions were only occasional, separated by long intervals of almost un-

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disturbed propagandism? Mill, at least, was under no delusions on this score.

> The dictum [he wrote] that truth always triumphs over persecution is one of those pleasant falsehoods which men repeat after one another till they pass into commonplaces, but which all experience refutes. History teems with instances of truth put down by persecution. If not suppressed forever, it may be thrown back for centuries. . . . In Spain, Italy, Flanders, the Austrian empire, Protestantism was rooted out . . . Persecution has always succeeded, save where the heretics were too strong a party to be effectually persecuted.

It is precisely because persecution *is* so effective that the struggle for liberty must be so continuous and so unrelenting.

But these few criticisms give a false emphasis. Mr. Laski has written an essay admirable in temper, often acute and penetrating, and at times movingly eloquent. It is fine restatement of a noble case.

HENRY HAZLITT

Pagan-Catholic Mexico

Religious Aspects of the Conquest of Mexico. By Charles S. Braden. Duke University Press. $3.50.

ECONOMIC and religious motives underlay the conquest of Hispanic America. Professor Braden of Northwestern feels that the religious aspects have been insufficiently emphasized. His purpose was to approach the history of Latin America from that angle. But he soon found this task too extensive both in space and in time. Accordingly he limited himself to Mexico and to the sixteenth century.

The book is written with scholarly detachment and judicious evaluation of the early chroniclers' testimony. The writings of the *conquistadores* and of the early missionaries—Motolinia, Mendieta, Sahagún, and the rest—pass in review. The author also relies considerably on the contemporary work of the Jesuit historian, Father Cuevas. No hitherto unknown documents have been utilized, but the reexamination of published material from a new viewpoint is a legitimate function of the historian.

The concluding chapter, which leaps four centuries, on The Permanent Influences of the Native Religions of Mexico upon Roman Catholic Christianity, is wholly inadequate. Professor Braden arrives somewhat hesitantly at the conclusion that "due to the interpenetration of the two types of religion [Roman Catholic and Pagan Aztec] which met in the Conquest, the resultant religion is to a degree different from either of the original cults" (p. 308). That thesis has been more fully demonstrated by other recent writers. Professor Braden's conclusion rests on a few extracts from travel books, none of them factual and written from half a century to a century ago. He complains that "the writers who trouble to give any reasoned basis for their opinions [of vestiges of the pagan cult in contemporary Mexican Catholicism] are very few" (p. 279), and that while he has sought for evidence in a "large number of books of travel and description of Mexico written at intervals throughout the history of Mexico . . . a great deal of reading has netted but meager results" (p. 328).

An examination of his bibliography amply reveals why the results were meager. The latest publication date of any book read was 1925—prior to the recent profusion of publications on Mexico—and the forty-five volumes listed in this category are not the ones which contain the information that he desired. The books which do Professor Braden apparently overlooked. First-hand observation in rural Mexico today would likewise have supplied overwhelming evidence of the vigorous persistence of Aztec religious patterns and practices.

ERNEST GRUENING

Robert Frost

The Collected Poems of Robert Frost. Henry Holt and Company. $5. Limited Edition published by Random House. One thousand copies numbered and signed. $15.

A READING of the "Collected Poems" can leave no doubt of Mr. Frost's importance. They have an appearance of obscurity, but what renders them difficult to first reading renders them also powerful and compact. The simplicity of their subject matter is never betrayed into coarseness or sentimentality. They constitute a body of poetry certain to enter into classic American literature.

However, since current reviews of this volume are all praise and no serious criticism is being attempted, I think it may be of interest to point out the limiting elements in Mr. Frost's work. There is a danger in too complete an acceptance of any man's achievement, a possibility of his influence becoming a catch-all for literary prejudice.

Mr. Frost, for instance, is singularly out of touch with his own time. Indeed, many poets who antedate him are more contemporary in spirit. It has, indeed, been Mr. Frost's wish to keep out of his own age and his own civilization. We may go therefore to his poetry for diversion and relief from our time, but not for illumination. Mr. Frost does not understand our time and will make no effort to understand it. When he essays to speak of it, as in the long poem New Hampshire (one of the poorest in the book and a sort of pudding of irrelevancies), he shows a surprising lack of comprehension. There, to the challenge of contemporary ideas, he replies with know-nothing arrogance, "Me for the hills where I don't have to choose."

In fact, Mr. Frost's work is weakest in ideas. His style is gnomic; it sounds impressively thoughtful and many sentences have the rounded conclusiveness of proverbs. But his thought, disengaged from the style, is often discovered to be no thought at all, or a banality. (I am far from agreeing with Mr. George Moore and other advocates of "pure poetry" that ideas are foreign to the nature of poetry. Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Milton, Donne, Lucretius would have to be among the many poets sacrificed, and the purification of poetry would turn out to be its annihilation.) Mr. Frost has casual ambitions to be a philosopher in his poetry; and in these strivings he is not successful.

We may take for example the beautiful poem A Star in a Stone Boat. The star is a meteorite built into a stone wall. Mr. Frost follows it from its fall to the time a farmer finds it, handles it, puts it into a stone boat, and drags it to the wall he is building. We are given a marvelous sense of its weight and feel in the hands and the puzzled awe with which one looks at it. The concluding lines are perfect:

> Such as it is it promises the prize
> Of the one world complete in any size
> That I am like to compass, fool or wise.

These lines, summarizing as much of philosophy as the poem comes to, do not contain thought so much as a renunciation of thought. I doubt whether a poet of philosophic imagination could have given us a more satisfying poem. Nevertheless, this piece, so suggestive and so full of possibilities, shows how little the philosophic imagination is developed in Mr. Frost.

It is curious, therefore, that Mr. Frost should be so regularly praised for the thought content of his poetry. But there is a reason for it. The touch of philosophy in his writing is the commonest, most easily understood, most easily applied, most comforting form of thinking—renunciation. Mr. Frost adds to it no subtlety and no depths; when it occurs in his poems it is, despite the graces and novelties of his style, banality.

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I dwell upon this because it is the one respect in which Mr. Frost clearly shows himself to be influenced. The influence is New England, the New England of other days. The individuality of his style is one of the valuable effects of this influence, for New England life and tradition have always encouraged intense individualism. But this individualism derives in part from renunciation. What a man renounces he is free from and in freedom he can be himself. Perhaps here lies an explanation of the individuality of Mr. Frost's style. He has made a renunciation of usual poetic subject matter and usual poetic effects, not primarily for originality's sake, but in disdain of literary comforts. He has chosen instead to write of homely and country things, regarding them with his matchlessly keen observation and celebrating them with his almost painfully restrained eloquence. No doubt some deliberate and unnecessarily harsh lines are a further process of this renunciation.

Related to this lack of a developed and original philosophy is another lack. Mr. Frost's narrative poems are frequently poised upon a psychological situation. The satisfaction the poetry and the narrative give the reader often leaves him with the impression that Mr. Frost is an excellent psychologist. Now many poets have been good psychologists, as Freud has shown; but Mr. Frost as a psychologist does not get very far. He can describe sensations perfectly; in fact, such descriptions are among his finest achievements. But he does not reach beyond the sensation; and in a psychological narrative he does not reach beyond the fact. The interesting poem of the man who burned down his house to buy a telescope with the insurance money succeeds only in reporting a curiosity; the poem Maple, which attempts to describe the psychological effects of having an unusual name, stretches out to absurd length in the attempt and succeeds in doing no more than to supply the reader data for his own psychologizing.

No, the distinctions Mr. Frost achieves are not those of a thinker or a prober; nor does he need those. He has rounded out a poetic individuality of exceptional dignity; he has developed his descriptive powers to an accuracy so sensitive that his lines often have an effect of clairvoyance; and the patient, logical fulfilment of his metaphors gives his rhetoric an effectiveness achieved by very few poets besides him.

Mr. Frost's style is one of the most individual in all poetry and certainly the most individual of our time. The consciously aristocratic T. S. Eliot, with his almost selfish obscurities, the dazzlingly inventive E. E. Cummings, with all his inimitable experiments, sound like the generality beside him. It is impossible to describe this individuality because its most conspicuous elements, terseness and the use of plain words and the avoidance of metronomic rhythms, are characteristics of many other poets. One can only say that Mr. Frost writes in a manner wholly his own; and if he has been influenced in it at all, it is only in the individualism urged by the New England tradition.

The descriptive power of Mr. Frost is to me the most wonderful thing in his poetry. A snowfall, a spring thaw, a bending tree, a valley mist, a brook, these are brought not to, but into the experience of the reader. The method is simple and can be analyzed. What he describes is never a spectacle only, but an entire adventure. In Our Singing Strength we follow him disputing with birds a bit of roadway; in A Hillside Thaw we almost see him on his knees trying to feel with his hands the process of snow turning into water. With the sight and the act the emotional response comes naturally. The three fuse together and the experience comes whole to us. It is an effect rare even in the best poetry. This simultaneous description gives the reader almost a sensory instrument with which to share the perception; and since it is natural, anyway, for the reader to identify himself with the author, the result is to bring the reader into closer touch with this aloof poet than with many poets who directly seek such a companionship.

Metaphors as Mr. Frost uses them are more functional than they commonly are in poetry. Many poets have more abundance and more brilliance, but few have used metaphor so justly, so carefully, and so fully. It is worked in naturally and at length, becoming a part of the whole idea, not a mere illuminating flash. The most conspicuous example of this is A Hillside Thaw. The first three lines announce the metaphor,

> To think to know the country and not know
> The hillside on the day the sun lets go
> Ten million silver lizards out of snow!

For most poets this would be sufficient. They would turn to other metaphors. But Mr. Frost continues it for thirty-two lines more, and we have a wonderfully complete sense of the coolness, swiftness, and liquidness of these snow lizards that the night will catch and hold, and the sun will again release in the next daylight.

There remains to make some estimate among the poems themselves. The later sections are much superior to the earlier, where the poems are frequently incomplete, beginning with promises of drama, of discoveries of thought that fail into unresolved and weak endings. This disappears in the later poems which, with the exception of the poem New Hampshire, are sound throughout. On the whole it seems to me that the longer lyrics are the most thoroughly satisfying of his poems. The narratives, although among the best in English poetry, suffer from the incompatibility found in all narrative poetry which attempts to be realistic—the rivalry of the poetic and the colloquial. The attempt to fuse the two seems to me doomed to failure; a noble failure, preferable to easier successes, but a failure nevertheless. It were better for a narrative poem to be written wholly in poetic language, which, being complete and self-sufficient in its own terms, will sound natural, certainly more natural than when colloquialisms are inset and draw attention to their competing naturalness. A few of the very short lyrics in the book are inconsequential and, as in Fireflies in the Garden, tend to become cute. Mr. Frost seems to require space to express himself, for in a few lines his terseness and involution have the look of a mannerism.

In conclusion I wish to say again outright in words what I have already said by implication—Robert Frost is one of the great poets, one whose perceptions are among the most acute and the most personal in the whole range of literature. To this nearly every one of the poems written in his maturity bears witness.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

More of the Sangers

The Fool of the Family. By Margaret Kennedy. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

LET me say at once that I am one of the few persons who have not read "The Constant Nymph." I am unable to say, therefore, whether or not this new illumination of the Sanger chronicle is an improvement or otherwise on the earlier one. Taken by itself it is the story of Caryl Sanger, who lacked the fire and individuality that characterized his brothers and sisters, of Sebastian Sanger, who possessed that fire and individuality to a marked degree, of Miss Fenella McLean, whom both brothers loved and one of them married, and of their Muse. As a background, Papa Sanger, though posthumously, is very much in evidence. His sons, strangely enough, call him "Sanger," showing what a figure of legend he had become, even to them.

Miss Kennedy treats the Muse with great respect, and paints the Sangers as unvaryingly faithful to her in the face of love, betrayal, poverty, disloyalty, and death. This novel,

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then, is another story about the artistic temperament. It contains, besides much spirited writing and many scenes that are genuinely sincere and touching, all the old hokum about artists. Artists, and especially artists who approach genius, are irresponsible, they cannot live a regular life, they are not bound by the ordinary conventions, they should not be expected to conform to the usual standards of loyalty and honor. The Muse transcends these matters and in her presence all is forgiven. It is true that many geniuses have lived irresponsible and irregular lives. But that their irresponsibility and irregularity were due to their genius, or vice versa, I should consider a highly dubious generalization. There is, moreover, in this point of view always the implication that if, on the contrary, a man pays his debts, keeps his appointments, is faithful to his wife, and does not beat his children he cannot possibly possess that flame which sets the world afire. One has only to remember that irreproachable family man and indefatigable father, Johann Sebastian Bach, to see that this is nonsense. Some day some novelist will write a novel about an artist who never did anything spectacular in all his life except in the actual performance of his art. Nobody will believe it and perhaps nobody will read it; but it will be nearer the truth than the tales about wild-haired, wild-eyed, and unmanageable young men and women who do anything for the sake of Art.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Report on Dr. Pattee

The New American Literature. By Fred L. Pattee. The Century Company. $3.50.

PARRINGTON'S failure to complete his third volume has created a need for a book that gives some comprehensive interpretation of the literature of the past forty years. Professor Pattee is not, however, the man to take advantage of that kind of opportunity. The nearest he comes to proposing some sort of unifying thesis is in the three generalizations he suggests in his preface. These are all commonplace, and not one of them is consistently developed in the book.

Not only does Pattee fail to unify his material; he fails to exhibit anything like a sense of proportion. In the first place, he omits, rather strangely in view of his calling the book "The New American Literature," all detailed consideration of writers who have come into prominence in the last decade. But even if one accepts the book as a history of the period from 1890 to 1920, one finds the space peculiarly apportioned. There may be some justice in his devoting sixteen pages to Mencken and only two to Babbitt and More; but there is no justice at all in his giving three lines to John Jay Chapman and three pages to Elbert Hubbard. He omits, of course, discussion of the younger poets, but he also omits all reference to such older poets as Cabot, Stickney, Sterling, and Ficke—and gives a page apiece to Alan Seeger and Joyce Kilmer. He says very little about the drama and nothing at all about O'Neill. Dr. Pattee will, no doubt, say that he was pressed for space; but in that case why did he drag in Herman Melville, on the ground that he was revived in this period, and devote twenty-three pages to an elaborate critique of his work?

We next examine the book as a volume of criticism and find that as such it has almost no value at all. In one or two passages, notably in the chapter on Jack London, Pattee does do pioneer work, but such passages are exceptional. Frequently he dodges the critical task by announcing that the time is not yet ripe for adequate estimates; and after reading such critical judgments as he does indulge in, one regrets only that he does not dodge oftener. We read, for example, that much of Emily Dickinson's poetry "must be dismissed as jingling

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nonsense." We learn that Winston Churchill has written "the epic of the American Republic," whereas Ernest Hemingway has deliberately placed "strangeness and sex uncleanness and grotesque newness among his leading artistic canons." We find that T. S. Eliot is the "leading eccentric of the period," whereas Edgar Guest "despite his daily handicaps is a poet."

It must be evident at this point that the only conceivable use to be made of "The New American Literature" is as a reference book. But even as a reference book it must be used with caution. I have noted some twenty errors, varying in seriousness from the bestowal of a Ph.D. upon Van Wyck Brooks to a rather considerable confusion in the chronology of the muckraking movement. *American Literature*, one of whose editors Professor Pattee is, has frequently rebuked non-academic writers for their inaccuracies. If "The New American Literature" is a fair sample of what academic writers can do, most of us will stick to the journalists.

GRANVILLE HICKS

Books in Brief

The Approach to Shakespeare. By J. W. Mackail. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

Shakespeare's Problem Comedies. By William Witherle Lawrence. The Macmillan Company. $3.

Professor Mackail's approach to Shakespeare is literary as distinguished from historical or technical. Believing that the playwright is in danger of having his qualities obscured by various efforts these days to solve the "problems" of his work, he sets out to describe those qualities in their own terms. He is a famous critic, and he says some excellent things. Yet a reading of Professor Lawrence's book will convince the serious student that there is still something to be done in the field of historical criticism. Professor Lawrence has taken "All's Well That Ends Well," "Measure for Measure," "Troilus and Cressida," and "Cymbeline" to be a group of comedies in which Shakespeare, under the influence of literary fashion, chose to treat the deeper issues of human conduct in the light of a certain realism and without any intention of being gentle or charming. These have been the least understood of all the plays for the reason, Professor Lawrence says, that they have not been read with their medieval background in mind. He supplies this background by listing analogues of the plots in medieval fiction, by throwing light upon certain moral attitudes that had survived into Shakespeare's time, and by making clear the extent to which the same background affected Shakespeare's contemporaries in the theater. The result is that the comedies in question become clearer, more consistent, and more interesting than they have usually been made by previous commentators. Strangely enough, Professor Lawrence's approach is the more strictly literary of the two, since it insists upon a knowledge of Shakespeare's literary equipment and procedure. It is a definite and important contribution to the discussion of Shakespeare.

Four Contemporary Novelists. By Wilbur L. Cross. The Macmillan Company. $2.

The four contemporary novelists selected by Dean Cross as a supplement to his standard textbook "The Development of the English Novel" belong to the elder generation of English writers. The work and background of Joseph Conrad, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, and H. G. Wells are discussed at some length. Originally published in the *Yale Review*, these critical studies are a competent blend of biography and criticism written in an authoritative and scholarly manner. The best essay of the four is undoubtedly the estimate of John Gals-

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worthy, whose "Forsyte Saga" was once called by Hugh Walpole "the one universally read novel." The Bennett of "The Old Wives' Tale" and the Wells who remained essentially a gifted and inquisitive cockney are given less extensive treatment. This is an excellent conservative contribution to criticism.

The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Edited by Robert Bridges. Oxford University Press. $3.

A detailed consideration of the poetry of Hopkins appeared in the issue of *The Nation* of April 16, 1930. The present volume, a reprint of the edition of 1918, now a literary rarity, contains seventeen new poems. In the interval since 1918 Hopkins has won recognition as a major English poet. His few detractors accuse him of overcultivating verbal dexterity. However, a study of even his obscurest poems reveals that his experiments in internal rhyme, in counterpointed rhythm, and in word transposition have always a justified intention, and his failures are remarkably few. No other poet in the entire range of English literature has brought sense and sound into so perfect or beautiful a unity.

A Winter Miscellany. Edited and Compiled by Humbert Wolfe. Decorated by Frank Adams. The Viking Press. $2.50.

The author of "The Uncelestial City," with the aid of two friends, has compiled an eccentric anthology of prose and poetry having to do with winter. The selections range from Hakluyt's description of Russia, where the sailors of Queen Elizabeth after only a moment in the open "had their breath oftentimes so suddenly taken away, that they eftsoones fell down as men very neere dead, so great is the sharpness of that colde climate," to a poem by Chesterton; from a Calverley translation of Horace to an excerpt from Conrad; from the Pickwick Club on the ice to a mystical vision of Richard Crashaw's. There are sections devoted to the countryman's winter, the traveler's winter, the soldier's and sailor's winter, the reveler's and the fireside winter, the sportsman's winter, the poet's winter, and the religious winter. Each of the sections is prefaced by a hitherto unpublished poem by Mr. Wolfe, and the whole by a prose defense in a whimsical vein. The chief merit of the selections is their oddity, for the nature of his anthology has permitted Mr. Wolfe to depart from the beaten path and to include some odds and ends that most of us would not otherwise encounter. It is evident that the selections were made from wide reading and with a fair amount of imagination.

Minoans, Philistines and Greeks. By A. R. Burn. History of Civilization Series. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

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The Dutch and Swedes on the Delaware. By Christopher Ward. University of Pennsylvania Press. $5.

Mr. Ward has written a very readable history of the little-known world which stretched along the Delaware in the seventeenth century under the rule now of the Dutch,

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now of the Swedes, and now of the two together. In 1664 Great Britain took over this territory along with New Amsterdam to the north and east, and there are few survivals today of the picturesque society which preceded the seizure. Mr. Ward, writing with warmth and imagination, revives as much of it as can now be known.

Music

From Behind a Screen

THERE is a favorite theory among professional musicians that if all the critics could be gathered together in a room and played and sung to from behind a screen, without announcement of artists, compositions, or composers, they would all be completely at sea. The value of music criticism would thus be shown to be nil, and critics would be exposed as the parasites they are.

It is true that it would be a rather bewildering experience. But would it necessarily prove the uselessness of the critics? As well say that the title of an unfamiliar work and the name of its composer should be of no importance to the performing musician—that he should play at first sight a nameless and anonymous work just as well as if he knew its origin. This theory rests upon the notion that music is "just music" and that one should be able to assay a piece of it as one would a piece of iron ore.

Now, if the recent chamber-music concert of the League of Composers had been given under the circumstances outlined above, I am not at all sure what the outcome would have been. I think many of us would have spotted the Hindemith String Quartet, for the combination of great harmonic freedom, lively and fairly conventional rhythm, and immense fluency and technical sureness is unusual enough to eliminate all but a few. It is not impossible that we would have happened on Kodaly as the composer of the other quartet. But I am quite sure that few of us would have thought of Aaron Copland in connection with the piano Variations he played. Had his authorship been suggested, we would have said they lacked the cogency, the finish, the spontaneity of the Copland works we already knew—the "Music for the Theater," say; the two pieces for violin and piano; the piano Concerto.

I do not say that the Variations seemed more cogent or more spontaneous because we knew Copland wrote them. I say only that those who know some of his earlier works are bound to consider the Variations in the light of those works. For music is not "just music," and a piece of it cannot always be analyzed separately. The adequacy of a composer's powers of expression may be much less constant than the value of what he has to express. Thus, the content of certain music is really understood only by reference to other works in which the composer has expressed himself more successfully. And some works of mediocre intrinsic worth are of interest chiefly for their artistic and historical relations with the composer's more important music. Only closer acquaintance will indicate whether these Variations are important in themselves, or in relation to the rest of Copland's work, or not at all.

If performers, on the other hand, could remain anonymous, it would be very helpful. For they, unlike composers, are important, not for what distinguishes them one from another, but for what, in greater or less degree, they have in common—the ability to realize faithfully the intentions and implications of the composer. In a recent week we had recitals by three violinists of first rank: Szigeti, Yehudi Menuhin, and Heifetz. In forming an opinion of their performance, how is it possible

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to exclude what should be excluded: Mr. Heifetz's apparent ease; Mr. Szigeti's bodily angularity; above all, Yehudi Menuhin's fourteen years?

Prejudices based on these things being inevitable, a certain discount must be made for them. On the score of technical purity and accuracy of intonation, Yehudi can afford to give the discount, for a comfortable margin separated him from his elders. There was no music on his program so deeply moving as the slow movement of Beethoven's "Kreutzer Sonata," as Mr. Szigeti played it, but that lack of depth was doubtless more in the Mozart and Viotti concertos themselves than in his playing. Mr. Heifetz still dazzles, and the few technical defects of his performance were noticed only, perhaps, because from him one expects nothing short of perfection in technique. On the musical side, he seems to have added to what used to be called his heartless playing the mannerisms of more sentimental players. So that for a real *tempo rubato* (i. e., bending of the rhythm to meet the requirements of phrase structure) he seems to substitute a superimposed "expression" (i. e., rhythmic distortion added to an essentially unfelt performance). But this is really a case where no substitutes will do, and his earlier chaste and regular playing was by far preferable to this.

It might have been possible to hide Mr. Heifetz's identity behind a screen, but I do not think his substitution of "expression" for truly sensitive phrasing would be so easy to conceal.

ARTHUR MENDEL

Drama

The Comic Spirit Takes a Rest

THE coming on last week of two new plays by George Kelly and Philip Barry was grounds for supposing that the week in question might make an important contribution to the history of American comedy. But not so. Mr. Kelly, whose danger has always been not that he should become savage, which he usually and effectively is, but that he should become serious, became deadly serious well before the middle of "Philip Goes Forth" (Biltmore Theater); and Mr. Barry, who wrote "Hotel Universe" as well as "Holiday," simply refrained from being comic at all in "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" (Henry Miller's Theater). Yet it was a good week. For Mr. Barry's play was excellent for another reason, and Mr. Kelly's was a very capable—and therefore only a comparative—failure.

Mr. Kelly's failure was a failure to maintain that attitude of skepticism toward his characters and their convictions which I take to be the distinguishing sign of comedy. In his first act, which was much the best of the three, he did maintain such an attitude, for there was then no way of knowing which of the two antagonists was right—the young Middle Westerner who wanted to come to New York and write plays, or his blustering father who would bully him into staying at home in the family business. Either might be right, either might be wrong; and I hoped that we should never find out which was what. But we did, for by the time the second act was well under way Mr. Kelly had begun to decide for himself and to try to convince us. He discovered the truth, which is a deadly thing for a comic writer to do. He even created an oracle through which the truth should be delivered to us—Mrs. Ferris, the young man's landlady in New York. From the moment Mrs. Ferris began to speak the play began to sink, and nothing could lift it up again to its very bright first level. Mrs. Ferris's message was this: that we can tell a true artist by the fact that he likes to do the work which his

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DEBATE

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WHICH CAN BE APPLIED TO
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NO says ELMER RICE, Author of "Street Scene"

Chairman: Arthur Garfield Hays

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art requires, and that we can tell a fake one by the fact that he thinks chiefly of fame or money. Even if this were true it would be out of place in a comedy such as "Philip Goes Forth" started out to be; and it probably is not true. Mr. Kelly grows quite romantic about sincerity—and puts, for instance, some very bad poetry in the mouth of Mrs. Ferris's most "genuine" artist, Miss Krail, on the occasion—surely invented to convert us—of the musician's suicide. Not that the play lacked pungent dialogue; and not that it was anything but very intelligently acted, in particular by Harry Ellerbe as the young playwright and by Dorothy Stickney as the pathetic poetess. And I dare say there were many in the audience who were glad to be convinced that the "real" artist dotes on the drudgery of his calling.

Mr. Barry's play is a deeply touching version for modern minds of the story of Elisha and the Shunammite woman. The prophet in this case is a famous Canadian physician with great though vaguely defined powers as a healer. The woman to whom he gives a son—quite in the natural way, be it said—is a young Middle Western wife who has so much more imagination than her good-natured husband that she cannot be wholly occupied in his house and cannot, for instance, conceive a child by him. The coming of the specialist, however, changes all that; a boy, his son, is born; and several years later the specialist is called back from his travels to prevent the child's death from a mysterious affliction which is probably psychological. Leaving then for the last time he asks the wife to go with him, and she does not go.

The old story is translated with the utmost ingenuity, yet the chief virtue of the play lies in its dialogue, which has all the lightness of Mr. Barry's best comic writing at the same time that it is sensitive to an extreme and beautiful degree. Mr. Barry is always tactful and tasteful, even to the point of turning his head from the more painful moments and entertaining us with charming remarks about watch crystals that won't stay in. He proceeds—and succeeds—always by understatement, by the cultivated gestures of polite comedy. This in a play whose theme calls for comparison with that of "Strange Interlude"! The difference between the two pieces defines very well the quality of Mr. Barry, who certainly will never try to achieve the full and powerful tragic note of Mr. O'Neill. He prefers pathos, of which he is a master. But it is worth noting that pathos merely touches us, making us softly cry perhaps. Tragedy moves us, though at a greater distance, and does so by overstatement in the grand style. Tragedy moves us more, and perhaps more significantly; it cannot touch us, however, for it is not tender. The acting of Herbert Marshall as the specialist and Zita Johann as the wife is in the neighborhood of the season's best. MARK VAN DOREN

Contributors to This Issue

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‡Meet My Sister—Shubert—44 St. W. of B'way.
†Once in a Lifetime—Music Box—W. 45 St.
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†The Greeks Had a Word For It—Harris—42 St. W. of B'way.
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†Vinegar Tree—Playhouse—48 St. E. of B'way.

* Drama. † Comedy. ‡ Musical.

Films

Sous les Toits de Paris—(French)—Little Carnegie—57 St. E. of 7 Ave.

Zwei Herzen Im 3-4 Takt—(German)—55 St. Playhouse E. of 7 Ave.

News Reel—Embassy—B'way and 46 St.

Morocco—beginning Sat., Jan. 24; Outbound Bound, beginning Wed., Jan. 28—The Plaza—58 St. E. of Madison Ave.

Gretel Und Liesel (Kohlhiesel's Tochter)—8 St. Playhouse—52 W. 8 St.

Music

Philharmonic Symphony, (Bernardino Molinari conducting)—Carnegie Hall—Thurs. eve., 22, Fri. aft., Jan. 23, Sat. eve.. Jan. 24.

Albert Spalding, violinist—Carnegie Hall, Sun. Jan. 25 at 2:30 P. M.

Sigrid Onegin, contralto—Town Hall—Sun., Jan. 25 at 3 P. M.

Jose Iturbi, pianist—Carnegie Hall—Mon., Jan. 26 at 8:30 P. M.

Philadelphia Orchestra, (Ossip Gabrilowitsch conducting)—Carnegie Hall—Tues. eve., Jan. 27.

London String Quartet—Town Hall—Thurs. eve., Jan. 29.

Mary Wigman, dancer—Carnegie Hall—Sat. eve., Jan. 31.

League of Composers—Second concert of Modern Chamber Music—The Art Center—Sun. aft., Feb. 1

Rachmaninoff, pianist—Carnegie Hall—Sat. aft., Feb. 14.

Myra Hess, pianist—Town Hall—Sun. aft., Feb. 15.

Debates and Lectures

"Resolved that the Best Political Service Can Be Rendered by Joining the Socialist Party"—Debate—Heywood Broun and Norman Thomas vs. Clarence Darrow and Arthur Garfield Hays—Mecca Temple—133 W. 55 St.—Fri., Jan. 30 at 8:30 P. M.

Are There Generally Accepted Standards of Decency Which Can be Applied to The Theatre—Debate—John Haynes Holmes and Elmer Rice—Community Church Auditorium—Wed., Jan. 28 at 8:15 P. M.

Will Birth Control Improve Our Race—Dr. Charles Francis Potter—Auditorium—150 W. 85 St.—Tues. Jan. 27 at 8:30 P. M.

What is Happening in the New York Theatre—Irma Kraft—Auditorium—150 W. 85 St.—Sun., Feb. 1 at 4:30 P. M.

PLAYS

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Mexico Turns to Fascist Tactics

By CARLETON BEALS

DURING the past twenty years Mexico has embarked upon many military, social, and political adventures. Now, the leaders in control of the government have established an all-powerful official ruling party. They have forged the National Revolutionary Party (founded after Obregón's assassination in 1928) into a close-knit disciplined organization designed to control national affairs completely and be the final arbiter in matters of state. The Communist Party in Russia, the Fascist Party in Italy, the Kuomintang in China—all are dictatorial one-party expressions, but they all antedated the seizure of power. But like the Unión Patriótica of Primo de Rivera, the new National Revolutionary Party (PNR) is a post-revolutionary creation, imposed from above, to achieve support of the regime already in power.

The restricted official character of the new ruling party did not clearly display itself until toward the end of the provisional presidency of Portes Gil, when by executive decree every government employee was required to donate seven days' pay a year to sustain the party, thus converting it into a bureau of political control instead of a bona fide party.

The PNR was baptized in its official role at a meeting in the Ideal Theater in Mexico City, a meeting attended by high heads of the party from all over the country and by President Ortiz Rubio and his cabinet. Heretofore, during past "revolutionary" administrations, official groups camouflaged their governmental connections. Calles and his cabinet members were wont to attend the conventions of the Mexican Labor Party and the Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor (CROM), but these groups, while they basked in the sunlight of governmental favor, had no monopoly of political activities in the country.

Portes Gil, as new head of the PNR, defended the forced collection of funds from public employees. He declared that if these funds were used purely for political and electoral purposes, those affected would have the right to protest, but "everyone is advised, especially functionaries and public employees, that the funds gathered in this manner will be used for important and noble ends." Out of these funds, according to Portes Gil, the PNR would establish a life-insurance fund and provide doctors and medical supplies to care for all illnesses of all government servants and all members of the party. The PNR would aid the new government labor banks to promote workers' and peasants' cooperatives, would foster rural credits, and see to the proper functioning of the new peasant communes, preventing them from falling into the control of cheap political agitators. In Mexico City, the PNR would establish a "Proletarian Home" to care for workers' children and provide lodgings for all visiting workers' and peasants' delegations. Workers' cultural activities and ambulatory social missions would be furthered, and the Museum of the Revolution and a Workers' and Peasants' University would be founded. Finally, the party would attempt to develop new proletarian leaders "who will not exploit their followers." Such was the program laid down by the politician who has done more than any other single person in Mexico to destroy all existing workers' and peasants' organizations.

In detail, many of these proposals overlap present government activities, and it seems a device, in part, by which the PNR may take over certain radical undertakings and thus curry favor with the masses, who are not permitted to organize freely outside of the PNR, while at the same time the government itself presents a more diplomatic and respectable front to the world. Portes Gil concluded: "The PNR is frankly a government party. . . . The revolution having been made, the government needs an organization of agitation and defense. The PNR is proud to be this organ of agitation and defense. The government has the program of the revolution. The party has the program of the government and the revolution."

These are the avowed "important and noble ends" toward which the PNR will work by means of the funds extracted from government employees—a total of at least 30,000,000 pesos during Ortiz Rubio's administration. The functional theory behind the undertaking is, of course, that of the Roman-Prussian superstate, strained through Communist and Fascist practice and adapted to Mexican needs.

What chance has this unilateral party for success? The PNR is relatively a new organization, though directed by political and military personalities who have emerged successful during the past twenty years of strife. It was founded to bridge a definite crisis resulting from the 1928 assassination of President-elect Obregón. Almost anybody who could lay the slightest claim to being "a revolutionary" had clambered upon the Obregón reelection band-wagon. Among his campaign followers could be discerned: (1) the Calles group, including the Mexican Labor Party, led by Morones, then Secretary of Industry, and the more disciplined wing of the army, controlled by General Joaquín Amaro, Secretary of War; (2) the surviving anarchic but powerful generals, long closely associated with Obregón, those who had surged up recklessly during the worst years of disorder, such as Manzo, Topete, Escobar, Aguirre, Caraveo, Urbalejo; (3) the middle wing of the army, half pro-Calles, half pro-Obregón—Saenz, Almazán, Pérez Treviño, Rodríguez, and others; (4) the peasant groups, especially favored by Obregón at the time—the National Agrarian Party (founded by Soto y Gama in 1920), with whom was now associated Aurelio Manrique, ex-governor of San Luis Potosí, a party bitterly anti-Calles, and the National Peasants' League, under Ursulo Galván, indirectly supported by Secretary of Interior Adalberto Tejeda and at that time affiliated with the Moscow peasants' international; (5) the Communist Party; (6) the bureaucratic Alliance of Socialist Parties of the Republic, founded and swayed by the notorious gunman, Deputy Gonzalo N. Santos; and (7) the outstanding state bosses, such as Tejeda of Vera Cruz, Zuno of Jalisco, Garrido of Tabasco, Portes Gil of Tamaulipas. Some of the generals,

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such as Pérez Treviño, Saenz, Caraveo, and Rodríguez, were also powerful state bosses.

There was no fundamental cohesion, no unity of program. Even before the campaign was over the Calles labor group had broken sharply with Obregón, and it became open gunning season between the followers of both bands. After Obregón's election and death the political pattern broke up completely. The various soup-kitchen groups split badly. Things looked shaky. Calles was the only strong pivot, and about him swirled the torrent of frustrated ambitions. To save the situation Calles clung to the Amaro wing of the army but threw overboard his long-standing friends, the Laborites. The state bosses, or caciques, saved themselves out of the wreck because of their strong regional support. The middle wing of the army wavered, then fused with the Amaro wing. In March, 1929, the unruly old-line generals dashed into sordid revolt. Part of the National Agrarian Party, led by black-bearded Manrique, jumped in with the rebellious generals. The rest of the peasant elements pursued a policy of watchful waiting. The Communists launched bitter and insensate personal attacks upon Calles, Portes Gil, and other Obregón elements.

Portes Gil assumed the provisional presidency, a compromise man to bridge the gap between the pro-Calles elements and the pro-Obregón elements, except that the Labor Party was definitely out. Portes Gil intensified his onslaught upon Morones and the CROM by propaganda, by police coercion, and by subsidizing enemies of the CROM. The National Agrarian Party was subjected to a coup d'etat by official elements and died a natural death. The romantic Zapatista lawyer, Soto y Gama, retired to a life of quiet study. The National Peasants' League split into various factions, and an official coup ejected the founder, Ursulo Galván, who died planning a revolution after an operation at Rochester. The Communist Party was ruthlessly suppressed, its Moscow agitators were deported, and various members were shipped off without trial to the Islas Marías penal colony. Everything was smashed except the PNR, conceived and founded by Calles to inaugurate an era of liberal democracy. Now, back of the government stands the PNR; back of the PNR stands Calles, who, according to Luis León, "broke the shield of his own military leadership to cover himself with the tunic of democracy."

But in Mexico no ruler can long afford to wear the tunic of democracy. Political control is still too precarious. True, a freer system of political expression had grown up in the shadow of the revolution, but the PNR, under the stress of Obregón's assassination and the subsequent political confusion, not only had to consolidate itself internally, but also had to establish its sway in the tempest of conflicting groups and ambitions. The original democratic concepts were dumped. The first true demonstration of PNR democracy was the installation of an absolutely 100 per cent PNR chamber and senate, over which the pistol of Gonzalo N. Santos waved menacingly—no members of the Labor Party, no Catholics, no Vasconcelists, no representation whatsoever from any but the official group.

In April, 1930, Portes Gil left the cabinet of Ortiz Rubio to take over the party, which was threatened with its initial disruption. Congress had split into "reds" and "whites" quarreling over control of jobs and the permanent commission which controls the seating of future members. The whites had been given control of the commission by Pérez Treviño, Minister of Agriculture, then head of the PNR, but the reds, led by Campillo Seyde of Vera Cruz and Gonzalo N. Santos, made a coup. Seventeen of them were promptly expelled from the PNR. Portes Gil now reinstated the reds and a division of control was agreed upon, but the strife continued back in the states. Finally, however, differences were patched up.

No sooner had Portes Gil and León secured control of the party machinery than they began to use it for personal ends, installing their relatives and friends in key positions. One of Portes Gil's henchmen was General Ortiz Rubio, who had earlier in the year inaugurated a minor reign of terror and jailed all opponents of the PNR. He had been transferred to a northern state where he was again making trouble by attempting to undermine the control of Saenz and Pérez Treviño. Rumors of revolution against Ortiz Rubio even got under way. Calles jumped back upon the scene, Portes Gil and Luis León were ejected from the PNR, and it was turned over to the Amaro army group by the appointment of young General Cárdenas from Michoacán, Amaro's home state. The PNR, after having crushed all organized popular political expression, now represents an army party.

The only organization which has attempted, and to some slight extent successfully, to put up any opposition to the PNR steam roller is the flouted Labor Party under Morones. The Laborites have united with the two "out" factions, the Anti-Reelectionists and the Socialist Party. The particular *bête noir* of the Laborites was Portes Gil, and his recent elimination at least removes an element of personal bitterness from the controversy. According to Morones, Mexican politics have become a cemetery with the PNR acting as the hangman. The collection of the seven days' pay a year from government employees has led Morones to dub the PNR the "Thirty-One Club," because the money is collected on the last day of each thirty-one-day month. What the Laborites forget is that the idea was inaugurated by themselves, for when the Labor Party controlled public office, each bureaucratic chief forced all subordinates to belong to the Labor Party and pay a percentage of salary into the coffers of the party. The PNR differs only in that it has monopolized and universalized this privilege, forcing all other parties out of existence through presidential decree.

In the past, attempts similar to that of the PNR to dominate Mexican politics have been met by the cry of "Imposition." This accounted for the downfall of Carranza. But as the leading daily, *Excelsior*, shrewdly remarked at the time, the reason that Carranza did not succeed in imposing Ignacio Bonillas as a puppet president was precisely because the Liberal Constitutionalist Party of Carranza was more a name than a fact and he did not choose Bonillas soon enough or support him long enough. Also, Ortiz Rubio still had other supporting elements besides the PNR when he was thrust into office by Calles and Portes Gil; he had the nominal support of the Laborites and he had the army of Joaquín Amaro; and his way was paved by the successful suppression of the 1929 revolt.

The PNR, more than any of its bureaucratic party predecessors, bears the earmarks of the privileged parties of the dictatorial European regimes mentioned in the first paragraph of this article. The PNR is the government and the

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government is the PNR; and thus far no quarter has been given to any elements outside of that combination. Here is the first time an official government party, sustained by the government and dedicating itself to keeping the government in power through effectively destroying all opposition and even all sympathizers not definitely in the party, has functioned in quite this manner in Mexico. And by the militarization of the PNR, politics in Mexico have been reduced to factional feuds. The conflicts revolving around the problems of labor, agriculture, nationalism, the church, and foreign capital have been relegated to second rank.

What is to be done about the seven million people dislocated from the haciendas and thrust into free villages without the proper economic basis for self-maintenance? They must be driven back on to the large haciendas, which are now, in many places, in the hands of Calles, Portes Gil, Saenz, León, and others. Or the country must be rapidly industrialized. Or the population must be kept down by armed force. Or the agrarian revolution must go on to its logical conclusion. The immediate answer will probably lie in a partial reabsorption of the peasants into the large private haciendas and the suppression of all efforts at continuing the agrarian revolution by armed force. Industrialization still seems remote. American capital is still wary, and though it has seized a few key positions, such as new railroad extensions, the light and power resources (Electric Bond and Share), and the telephones, and though the National City Bank has installed itself, the major raw-product industries—petroleum, henequen, and mining—are in a ruinous state.

The evolution from one-man dictatorship to party dictatorship may represent a real advance in Mexico. But the PNR has cut the roots of its popular origin. Furthermore, the road of the one-party system is fraught with even more difficulties than one-man dictatorship. To survive, such a party needs a powerful personality at its head, an iron-clad organization, a fearless willingness to employ any opportunistic means; and at bottom it must have a military basis as in Italy, Russia, and China. Already Portes Gil has demonstrated how such a party may be turned into a personal machine. In eliminating him and turning to the Amaro war party, Calles has definitely jumped from the frying-pan into the fire, but he has insured more party stability.

For a time the regime made an honest effort to promote native industry and to create a sustaining economic basis for an independent governmental system along the lines of native capitalist development. The dilemma is now clear. Calles could not provide the support necessary for a native industry competing with foreign enterprise and at the same time support the Labor Party, which was making inroads from another direction. Obregón's program had better chance for success. He threw overboard the Laborites and turned to the peasants. Calles has now thrown overboard the Laborites and turned to the army. All the popular roots of the regime having been cut, it can only maintain itself by a foreign alliance, namely, with the American State Department. The present Mexican regime is now in the same position as was Leguía in Peru, Luis in Brazil, Siles in Bolivia, Machado in Cuba, and Moncado in Nicaragua. Mexico is a much harder country to control, but if Calles and Amaro are moderately successful they will come to depend more and more upon the United States. One of these days even a good fat bond issue may be in order.

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